

1 6 7 2 5 3



THE UNIVERSAL ANTHOLOGY

WITH BIBLIOGRAPHIC ESSAYS

BY

RICHARD GARNETT
(ENGLISH LITERATURE)

LEON VALLÉE
(FRENCH LITERATURE)

ALOIS BRANDL
(GERMAN LITERATURE)

AND

PAUL BOURGET
(French Critical Essays)

ÉMILE ZOLA
(French Naturalistic Literature)

EDWARD DOWDEN
(Elizabethan Literature)

DEAN FARRAR
(Literature of Religious Criticism)

L. MELCHIOR DE VOGÜÉ
(Russian Literature)

DONALD G. MITCHELL
(Collected Literature)

F. BRUNETIERE
(Modern French Poetry)

HENRY SMITH WILLIAMS
(Scientific Literature)

ANDREW LANG
(Nineteenth Century Literature)

HENRY JAMES
(The Novel)

MAURICE MAETERLINCK
(The Modern Drama)

PASQUALE VILLARI
(The Italian Renaissance)

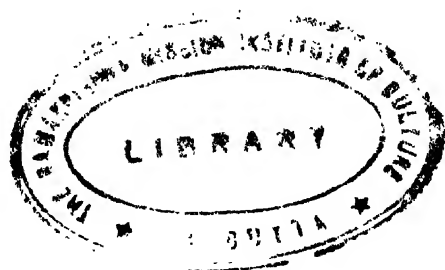
BRET HARTE
(Short Stories)

ARMANDO PALACIO VALDES
(Decadent Literature)

EDMUND GOSSE
(Poetry)

J. P. MAHAFFY
(Historical Literature)

WALTER BESANT
(Historical Novels)



THE GROLIER SOCIETY

PUBLISHERS OF

THE BOOK OF KNOWLEDGE

THE BOOK OF HISTORY

THE EVERYDAY LIBRARY





²
MEST LI SIRE
 AL ONET SEU
 ENVR SE UEVERS
 LES OEFIES DESTRES
 Desquies pose
 let uent enemise
 esramel cleres piez.



ANCIENT FRENCH MANUSCRIPTS. (Fourteenth Century.)

Although it does not appear that any translation of the Scriptures into the French language was made previous to the beginning of the fourteenth century, versions of detached parts of the Bible, of an earlier date, exist in MSS. which are regarded as of great value by the French philologists.

Ancient French MSS.

Although it does not appear that any translation of the Scriptures into the French language was made previous to the beginning of the fourteenth century, versions of detached parts of the Bible exist, of a previous date, in MS., which are consequently regarded as of great value by the French philologists. Nor are they less esteemed by the English antiquary, considering the long and intimate connection between the French and English nations, especially during the period when our language was undergoing its transformation from the old Anglo-Saxon to the modern English.



LIBRARY EDITION

THE UNIVERSAL ANTHOLOGY

A COLLECTION OF THE BEST LITERATURE, ANCIENT, MEDIEVAL AND
MODERN, WITH BIOGRAPHICAL AND EXPLANATORY NOTES

EDITED BY
RICHARD GARNETT

Keeper of Printed Books at the British Museum, London, 1851 to 1899

LEON VALLÉE

Librarian at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, since 1871

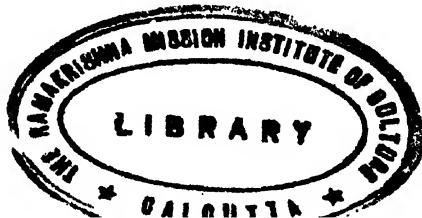
ALOIS BRANDL

Professor of Literature in the Imperial University of Berlin

Two Volumes in One
Volumes 27 and 28

PUBLISHED BY
THE GROLIER SOCIETY
NEW YORK

THE STANDARD LITERATURE COMPANY
CALCUTTA



Library Edition

Limited to five hundred sets

*Number*_____

**Entered at Stationers' Hall
London, 1899**

**Droits de reproduction et de traduction réservé
Paris, 1899**

**Alle rechte, insbesondere das der Übersetzung, vorbehalten
Berlin, 1899**

**Proprieta Letieraria, Riservatè tutti i divitti
Rome, 1899**

**Copyright, 1899
by
Richard Garnett**

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

VOLUME XXVII.

	PAGE
Victorine's Marriage <i>George Sand</i>	23
A Wedding Call <i>Alexandre Dumas, Jr.</i>	75
Giboyer's Son <i>Émile Augier</i>	111
The Essence of Giboyer (A Retort to "Giboyer's Son") <i>Louis Veuillot</i>	197
Society where they are Bored <i>Édouard Pailleron</i>	267
The Man in Black <i>José Echegaray</i>	346

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

VOLUME XXVII.

ANCIENT FRENCH MANUSCRIPTS (Illuminated)	.	<i>Frontispiece</i>
		PAGE
BRET HARTE	13
GIVING ALMS	226



Bret Harte

THE RISE OF THE "SHORT STORY"

BY BRET HARTE

As it has been the custom of good-natured reviewers to associate the present writer with the origin of the American "short story," he may have a reasonable excuse for offering the following reflections,—partly the result of his own observations during the last thirty years, and partly from his experience in the introduction of this form of literature to the pages of the western Magazine of which he was editor at the beginning of that period. But he is far from claiming the invention, or of even attributing its genesis to that particular occasion. The short story was familiar enough in form in America during the early half of the century; perhaps the proverbial haste of American life was some inducement to its brevity. It had been the medium through which some of the most characteristic work of the best American writers had won the approbation of the public. Poe—a master of the art, as yet unsurpassed—had written; Longfellow and Hawthorne had lent it the graces of the English classics. But it was not the American short story of to-day. It was not characteristic of American life, American habits, nor American thought. It was not vital and instinct with the experience and observation of the average American; it made no attempt to follow his reasoning or to understand his peculiar form of expression—which it was apt to consider vulgar; it had no sympathy with those dramatic contrasts and surprises which are the wonders of American Civilisation; it took no account of the modifications of environment and of geographical limitations; indeed, it knew little of American

geography. Of all that was distinctly American it was evasive—when it was not apologetic. And even when graced by the style of the best masters, it was distinctly provincial.

It would be easier to trace the causes which produced this than to assign any distinct occasion or period for the change. What was called American literature was still limited to English methods and upon English models. The best writers either wandered far afield for their inspiration, or, restricted to home material, were historical or legendary; artistically contemplative of their own country, but seldom observant. Literature abode on a scant fringe of the Atlantic seaboard gathering the drift from other shores, and hearing the murmur of other lands rather than the voices of its own; it was either expressed in an artificial treatment of life in the cities, or, as with Irving, was frankly satirical of provincial social ambition. There was much "fine" writing; there were American Addisons, Steeles, and Lambs—there were provincial "Spectators" and "Tatlers." The sentiment was English. Even Irving in the pathetic sketch of "The Wife" echoed the style of "Rosamund Grey." There were sketches of American life in the form of the English Essayists, with no attempt to understand the American character. The literary man had little sympathy with the rough and half-civilised masses who were making his country's history; if he used them at all it was as a foil to bring into greater relief his hero of the unmistakable English pattern. In his slavish imitation of the foreigner, he did not, however, succeed in retaining the foreigner's quick appreciation of novelty. It took an Englishman to first develop the humour and picturesqueness of American or "Yankee" dialect, but Judge Haliburton succeeded better in reproducing "Sam Slick's" speech than his character. Dr. Judd's "Margaret,"—one of the earlier American stories,—although a vivid picture of New England farm-life and strongly marked with local colour, was in incident and treatment a mere imitation of English rural tragedy. It would, indeed, seem that while the American people had shaken off the English yoke in Government, politics, and national progression, while they had already startled the Old World with invention and

originality in practical ideas, they had never freed themselves from the trammels of English literary precedent. The old sneer: "Who reads an American book?" might have been answered by another: "There are no *American* books."

But while the American literary imagination was still under the influence of English tradition, an unexpected factor was developing to diminish its power. It was *Humour*—of a quality as distinct and original as the country and civilisation in which it was developed. It was at first noticeable in the anecdote or "story," and, after the fashion of such beginnings, was orally transmitted. It was common in the bar-rooms, the gatherings in the "country store," and finally at public meetings in the mouths of "stump orators." Arguments were clinched, and political principles illustrated by "a funny story." It invaded even the camp meeting and pulpit. It at last received the currency of the public press. But wherever met it was so distinctly original and novel, so individual and characteristic, that it was at once known and appreciated abroad as "an American story." Crude at first, it received a literary polish in the press, but its dominant quality remained. It was concise and condense, yet suggestive. It was delightfully extravagant—or a miracle of understatement. It voiced not only the dialect, but the habits of thought of a people or locality. It gave a new interest to slang. From a paragraph of a dozen lines it grew into a half column, but always retaining its conciseness and felicity of statement. It was a foe to prolixity of any kind, it admitted no fine writing nor affectation of style. It went directly to the point. It was burdened by no conscientiousness; it was often irreverent; it was devoid of all moral responsibility—but it was original! By degrees it developed character with its incident, often, in a few lines, gave a striking photograph of a community or a section, but always reached its conclusion without an unnecessary word. It became—and still exists—as an essential feature of newspaper literature. It was the parent of the American "short story."

But although these beginnings assumed more of a national character than American serious or polite literature they were

still purely comic, and their only immediate result was the development of a number of humorists in the columns of the daily press—all possessing the dominant national quality with a certain individuality of their own. For a while it seemed as if they were losing the faculty of story-telling in the elaboration of eccentric character—chiefly used as a vehicle for smart sayings, extravagant incident, or political satire. They were eagerly received by the public and, in their day, were immensely popular, and probably were better known at home and abroad than the more academic but less national humorists of New York or Boston. The national note was always struck even in their individual variations, and the admirable portraiture of the shrewd and humorous showman in "Artemus Ward" survived his more mechanical bad spelling. Yet they did not invade the current narrative fiction; the short and long story-tellers went with their old-fashioned methods, their admirable morals, their well-worn sentiments, their colourless heroes and heroines of the first ranks of provincial society. Neither did social and political convulsions bring anything new in the way of Romance. The Mexican war gave us the delightful satires of Hosea Bigelow, but no dramatic narrative. The anti-slavery struggle before the War of the Rebellion produced a successful partisan political novel—on the old lines—with only the purely American characters of the negro "Topsy," and the New England "Miss Ophelia." The War itself, prolific as it was of poetry and eloquence—was barren of romance, except for Edward Everett Hale's artistic and sympathetic *The Man without a Country*. The tragedies enacted, the sacrifices offered, not only on the battlefield but in the division of families and households; the conflict of superb Quixotism and reckless gallantry against Reason and Duty fought out in quiet border farmhouses and plantations; the re-incarnation of Puritan and Cavalier in a wild environment of trackless wastes, pestilential swamps, and rugged mountains; the patient endurance of both the conqueror and the conquered—all these found no echo in the romance of the period. Out of the battle smoke that covered half a continent, drifted into the pages of magazines, shadowy but

correct figures of blameless virgins of the North—heroines or fashionable belles—habited as hospital nurses, bearing away the deeply wounded but more deeply misunderstood Harvard or Yale graduate lover who had rushed to bury his broken heart in the conflict. It seems almost incredible that, until the last few years, nothing worthy of that tremendous episode has been preserved by the pen of the romancer.

But if the war produced no characteristic American story it brought the literary man nearer his work. It opened to him distinct conditions of life in his own country, of which he had no previous conception; it revealed communities governed by customs and morals unlike his own, yet intensely human and American. The lighter side of some of these he had learned from the humorists before alluded to; the grim realities of war and the stress of circumstances had suddenly given them a pathetic or dramatic reality. Whether he had acquired this knowledge of them with a musket or a gilded strap on his shoulder, or whether he was later a peaceful "carpet bagger" into the desolate homes of the south and south-west, he knew something personally of their romantic and picturesque value in story. Many cultivated aspirants for literature, as well as many seasoned writers for the press, were among the volunteer soldiery. Again, the composition of the army was heterogeneous: regiments from the West rubbed shoulders with regiments from the East; spruce city clerks hobnobbed with backwoodsmen, and the student fresh from college shared his rations with the half-educated western farmer. The Union for the first time recognised its competent parts; the natives knew each other. The literary man must have seen heroes and heroines where he had never looked for them, situations that he had never dreamt of. Yet it is a mortifying proof of the strength of inherited literary traditions, that he never dared until quite recently to make a test of them. It is still more strange that he should have waited for the initiative to be taken by a still more crude, wild, and more western civilisation—that of California!

The gold discovery had drawn to the Pacific slope of the continent a still more heterogeneous and remarkable population. The

immigration of 1849 and 1850 had taken farmers from the plough, merchants from their desks, and students from their books, while every profession was represented in the motley crowd of gold-seekers. Europe and her colonies had contributed to swell these adventurers—for adventurers they were whatever their purpose; the risks were great, the journey long and difficult—the nearest came from a distance of over a thousand miles; that the men were necessarily pre-equipped with courage, faith, and endurance was a foregone conclusion. They were mainly young; a grey-haired man was a curiosity in the mines in the early days, and an object of rude respect and reverence. They were consequently free from the trammels of precedent or tradition in arranging their lives and making their rude homes. There was a singular fraternity in this ideal republic into which all men entered free and equal. Distinction of previous position or advantages were unknown, even record and reputation for ill or good were of little benefit or embarrassment to the possessor; men were accepted for what they actually were, and what they could do in taking their part in the camp or settlement. The severest economy, the direst poverty, the most menial labour carried no shame nor disgrace with it; individual success brought neither envy or jealousy. What was one man's fortune to-day might be the luck of another to-morrow. And to this Utopian simplicity of the people, the environment of magnificent scenery, an unique climate, and a vegetation that was marvellous in its proportions and spontaneity of growth; let it be further considered that the strongest relief was given to this picture by its setting among the crumbling ruins of early Spanish possession—whose monuments still existed in Mission and Presidio, and whose legitimate Castilian descendants still lived and moved in picturesque and dignified contrast to their energetic invaders—and it must be admitted that a condition of romantic and dramatic possibilities was created unrivalled in history.

But the earlier literature of the Pacific slope was, like that of the Atlantic seaboard, national and characteristic only in its humour. The local press sparkled with wit and satire, and as, in the East, developed its usual individual humorists. Of these

should be mentioned the earliest pioneers of Californian humour—Lieut. Derby, an U.S. army engineer officer, author of a series of delightful extravagances known as the "Squibbob Papers," and the later and universally known "Mark Twain" who contributed "The Jumping Frog of Calaveras" to the columns of the weekly press. *The San Francisco News Letter*, whose whilom contributor, Major Bierce, has since written some of the most graphic romances of the Civil War; *The Golden Era*, in which the present writer published his earlier sketches, and *The Californian*, to which, as editor, in burlesque imitation of the enterprise of his journalistic betters, he contributed "The Condensed Novels," were the foremost literary weeklies. These were all more or less characteristically American, but it was again remarkable that the more literary, romantic, and imaginative romances had no national flavour. The better remembered serious work in the pages of the only literary magazine *The Pioneer*, was a romance of spiritualism and psychological study, and a poem on the Chandos picture of Shakespeare!

With this singular experience before him, the present writer was called upon to take the editorial control of the *Overland Monthly*, a much more ambitious magazine venture than had yet appeared in California. The best writers had been invited to contribute to its pages. But in looking over his materials on preparing the first number, he was discouraged to find the same notable lack of characteristic fiction. There were good literary articles, sketches of foreign travel, and some essays in description of the natural resources of California—excellent, from a commercial and advertising view-point. But he failed to discover anything of that wild and picturesque life which had impressed him, first as a truant schoolboy, and afterwards as a youthful schoolmaster among the mining population. In this perplexity he determined to attempt to make good the deficiency himself. He wrote "The Luck of Roaring Camp." However far short it fell of his ideal and his purpose, he conscientiously believed that he had painted much that "he saw, and part of which he was," that his subject and characters were distinctly Californian, as was equally his treatment of them.

But an unexpected circumstance here intervened. The publication of the story was objected to by both printer and publisher, virtually for not being in the conventional line of subject, treatment, and morals! The introduction of the abandoned outcast mother of the foundling "Luck," and the language used by the characters, received a serious warning and protest. The writer was obliged to use his right as editor to save his unfortunate contribution from oblivion. When it appeared at last, he saw with consternation that the printer and publisher had really voiced the local opinion; that the press of California was still strongly dominated by the old conservatism and conventionalism of the East, and that when "The Luck of Roaring Camp" was not denounced as "improper" and "corrupting," it was coldly received as being "singular" and "strange." A still more extraordinary instance of the "provincial note" was struck in the criticism of a religious paper that the story was strongly "unfavourable to immigration" and decidedly unprovocative of the "investment of foreign capital." However, its instantaneous and cordial acceptance as a new departure by the critics of the Eastern States and Europe, enabled the writer to follow it with other stories of a like character. More than that, he was gratified to find a disposition on the part of his contributors to shake off their conservative trammels, and in an admirable and original sketch of a wandering Circus attendant, called "Centrepole Bill," he was delighted to recognise and welcome a convert. The term "imitators," often used by the critics who, as previously stated, had claimed for the present writer the *invention** of this kind of literature, could not fairly apply to those who had cut loose from conventional methods, and sought to honestly describe the life around them, and he can only claim to have shown them that it could be done. How well it has since been done, what charm of individual flavour and style has been brought to it by such writers as Harris, Cable, Page, Mark Twain in *Huckleberry Finn*, the author of the *Prophet of the Great Smoky Mountains*, and Miss Wilkins, the average reader need not be told. It would seem evident, therefore, that the secret of the American short story was the treatment of characteristic American life, with absolute

knowledge of its peculiarities and sympathy with its methods; with no fastidious ignoring of its habitual expression, or the inchoate poetry that may be found even hidden in its slang; with no moral determination except that which may be the legitimate outcome of the story itself; with no more elimination than may be necessary for the artistic conception, and never from the fear of the "fetish" of conventionalism. Of such is the American short story of to-day—the germ of American literature to come.

Butterfield

VICTORINE'S MARRIAGE.

By GEORGE SAND.

(Translated for this work by FORREST MORGAN.)

[ARMANTINE LUCILE AURORE DUPIN was born at Paris, July 5, 1804. Her ancestry was a mass of illegitimacies, some of them of the foremost ability and distinction, and several illuminating the problem of her genius and tastes: her mother, a bird-fancier's daughter, was the new-married mistress of her father, an able lieutenant of rich literary gifts; her paternal grandfather was a farmer-general, who married the illegitimate daughter of Marshal Saxe, himself the illegitimate son of Augustus the Strong of Saxony by Countess Königsmarck. She was therefore a blood relation of the later Bourbons, while a social rebel by her history, always pleading the cause of natural love against convention, and democracy against class feeling — the two chief notes of the very play here presented. At three she followed her father to Spain on Murat's staff, was adopted as the child of the regiment and dressed in uniform, and lived in the royal palace. Shortly after his return he was killed, and for ten years afterward she lived with her mother in her grandmother's château at Nohant in Berri, imbibing a passionate love for country life, and becoming deeply saturated with knowledge of the peasantry. The grandmother was an old aristocrat who hated the low-born mother and was jealous of her grandchild's affection, and the household was not peaceful. She picked up under a shirking tutor an irregular education, mainly of romance-reading. At thirteen she was sent to the English Augustinian convent in Paris, and was not allowed to go outside the walls for two years. For a while she "cut up" wildly; then had a sudden emotional conversion half based on homesickness. At sixteen she was recalled to Nohant, and resumed the old free life; but two years later (1822), on her grandmother's death, was about to return to the convent (presumably therefore having its charms for her), when her friends persuaded her into an "arranged" marriage with a retired officer, Baron Dudevant. They had a son and daughter, and no open quarrel; but he was a hunting, hard-drinking, unsentimental country squire, and after nine years she arranged an uncontested separation, took her daughter and an allowance of \$300 a year, and went to Paris to seek her fortune. After various genteel shifts and much squalid misery, she tried literature; failed on the *Figaro*; then struck up a literary partnership with an old Nohant visitor and young law student, Jules Sandeau, and wrote a novel with him, "Rose and Blanche," as by "Jules Sand." A second, "Indiana," she wrote alone; she

wished to preserve the figment of partnership and use the same pseudonym, but Sandeau would not consent, and she compromised on "George Sand." The novel, with an unhappily married and noble-hearted woman for heroine, and an unbearable husband and a not more estimable lover of the wife for male characters, created a tremendous sensation, and raised her at once to the foremost rank of French novelists. "Valentine," a novel glorifying misalliances, followed two months later; then (1833) "Lélie," a wild, glowing, hysterical assault on every sort of social law. It resulted in a most unhappy *liaison* and journey to Italy (1833-1835) with Alfred de Musset, proving that irregular relations are no more guarantee of happiness than regular ones. Musset told his version of it in his "Confession of a Child of the Century" (1836); in 1858 George Sand told hers with deep bitterness in "She and He," to which the poet's brother retorted with "He and She." The literary output of this period was first "The Private Secretary," motive a secret marriage with good results; and "Jacques," "André," and "Leone Leoni," on the theme evidently suggested by the situation, the same as Shelley's, that love should have no law but itself. "Mauprat" and "Simon" (1836) glorify the power of love to ennoble the dullest or wildest natures; "The Last Aldini" (1837) is on the chaste love of a great Venetian lady for her gondolier. "Letters of a Traveler" are a valuable pendant to the novels. Pierre Leroux influenced her toward socialism, Michel de Bourges (who took charge of obtaining her a legal divorce, in which she was given both children, and must therefore have had some right on her side) toward communism, and Lamennais to humanitarian Christianity: the various ideas found expression specially in the "Letters to Marcia" (1837), "Spiridion" (1838), "The Companion of a French Journey" (1841), "The Countess of Rudolstadt" (1843), and "The Miller of Angibault" (1845). In 1837 she had become warmly interested in the sick Chopin, and went with him to Majorca, where he recovered his health for the time; later, from 1843 till his death in 1849, she cared for him with great tenderness. She took a prominent part in the Revolution of 1848, but was disgusted with its results and retired to Nohant, where for more than a quarter of a century she lived in almost undisturbed peace, and a literary fertility so great that it cannot even be catalogued here, interested in her peasants and writing plays for her little theatre, making dresses for the marionettes, etc. Only the war of 1870 brought forth a sharp cry from her. She died June 8, 1876. Among her many other novels may be specially mentioned "The Devil's Pool" (1846), "Little Fadette" (1849), and "The Snow Man" (1859). Of her many plays, the most famous are the one here given (a sequel to Sedaine's "Philosopher Without Knowing it"), "François le Champi," "Claudie," and "The Marquis of Villemer."]

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

M. and MME. VANDERKE, a rich merchant and his wife.

ALEXIS VANDERKE, their son, naval officer; SOPHIE, their married daughter.

ANTOINE, Vanderke's confidential clerk; VICTORINE, his daughter.

FULGENCE, a clerk of Vanderke's.

A Servant.

Scene : A large French town in 1705.

ACT I.

Scene : Interior of a large mercantile office room. At right of the spectators, a table covered with papers and account books. At left, first wing, a high desk to write standing up at. Door at rear, door at right second wing.

SCENE I.

VICTORINE seated at left, handkerchief in hand and work on knees. ANTOINE standing, center.

Antoine — What ! I catch you with red eyes and embarrassed air, and you'll stick to it you haven't been crying ! or maybe you'll tell me as you generally do, that girls cry sometimes to make the time hang less heavy ?

Victorine — No, papa, I'll tell you this time : I'm crying — I'm crying because the time hangs heavy.

Antoine — And why does it hang heavy ? because you're a lazy creature. If you had to work fifteen hours a day like me, you wouldn't find the time long.

Victorine — But I don't find the time long, I find it dismal.

Antoine — Dismal ? it's superb weather. Victorine, I believe you're getting crazy !

Victorine — And, papa, you're getting cross ! — you speak harshly to me. [*Rises.*] Now, papa, what is it you've had against me for some time ?

Antoine [*meltd*] — I have — I have — [*Severely.*] I have, that I've no time to attend to your vapors — your foolishness — [*Returning to his desk.*] There's a girl to be pitied a lot because an honest marriage is being arranged for her ! [*Coming back, and angry to see Victorine crying again.*] Come now, I want to know what your tears are for — speak up !

Victorine — I assure you, father, I don't know myself. I am just like that : I want to cry at times, and still oftener since my marriage is settled.

Antoine — You don't want to get married because you know I want it. Is that it ?

Victorine — I didn't say —

Antoine — You don't like Fulgence ?

Victorine — Why, yes — I like him.

Antoine — No, no, you think he isn't elegant enough, fine enough for you !

Victorine — Oh, he is quite elegant enough for me.

Antoine — You don't value an honest man above everything else.

Victorine — Oh, but indeed —

Antoine — He doesn't spend time enough over you, he doesn't keep trying to please you, and as for me, I don't know what picking out a son-in-law means !

Victorine — Yes, yes, yes, yes ! — Good gracious, yes !

Antoine — Well, then, what *do* you want ? What marriage would you lay claim to ? You despise your father's station ! A clerk, a working man, oh pshaw ! You've got to have a marquis, a prince !

Victorine — Laugh at me all you like, papa, but I'm afraid of not loving my husband enough — that he won't be satisfied with what I am — that I shan't be sensible enough for him — well, I think it's too early to marry at seventeen.

Antoine [*seating himself at his desk*] — Would to heaven you had been married long ago !

Victorine — Oh, why do you wish that ?

Antoine — There's no use trying to make you understand. Look here, dry your silly eyes, and take up your work, while I go about mine.

Victorine — Do you need to have me stay here, papa ?

Antoine — Why, where are you going now ? You're never with me.

Victorine — Oh, I'll stay as long as you want ; I'm never better satisfied than with you. But while you're working at your figures, you don't look at me : it's just as if you were alone.

Antoine — Well, you look at me, as you've nothing better to do !

Victorine — Look at you ?

Antoine — Yes, look at me sharp while I work, and then you can tell me what you've been thinking about.

Victorine [*taking a chair and sitting down beside ANTOINE*] — I am willing, papa.

Antoine [*after rapidly copying a sheet, laying down his pen and looking at his daughter*] — Well ?

Victorine — Well, father ?

Antoine — What are you thinking about ?

Victorine — I am thinking about you.

Antoine — What are you thinking about me?

Victorine — That you have a great deal of trouble.

Antoine — A great deal! What next?

Victorine — That you are very fond of your master, the good M. Vanderke; that you would die for him as you have lived for him; that you place his interests above your own; that you know but one thing in the world, your duty, and that you would sacrifice to that duty your happiness — and mine, to say the last word!

Antoine — Yes! you are a sharp guesser, and you think straighter than you look to. And it follows —

Victorine — That I ought to imitate you in everything; not to have an idea or a will that you don't approve of, and always to have your example before my eyes.

Antoine — Never lose sight of that; and for the present, if you have any business in the house, go on. I won't hold you back.

Victorine [*rising*] — I'll go and see if Sophie —

Antoine — Can't you break yourself of that familiarity with Mademoiselle?

Victorine — Ah! And, papa, can't you break yourself in to calling her "Madame"? All right! I'll go and see if my young mistress [*aside, putting back her chair to the left*: my nice friend; — *aloud*] needs me. Won't you kiss me, father?
[*Goes up to ANTOINE.*]

Antoine [*looking at her intently*] — Do you deserve to have me kiss you, now, at the bottom of your heart?

Victorine — Yes.

Antoine [*gazing at her steadily*] — Quite sure?

Victorine — Oh, quite sure!

[*He kisses her. She goes out at rear, looking back at him tenderly.*]

SCENE II.

Antoine [*alone*] — Yes, it's quite sure. She is an honest soul, incapable of lying! She is young, weak, restless — but she is as honest as her poor mother was. Ah, how a girl needs her mother! We men don't understand anything about managing these young natures. [*To FULGENCE, who enters by door at right, holding papers.*] Ah, is it you, Fulgence?



SCENE III.

Fulgence — Monsieur sends you these two more accounts to register.

Antoine — All right : give them here.

Fulgence [*laying the accounts on ANTOINE'S desk*] — Isn't Mlle. Victorine here ? I haven't seen her yet to-day.

Antoine — Ah, these lovers !

Fulgence — Do you find fault with me for it, M. Antoine ?

Antoine — No, my boy, so long as your work doesn't suffer, and you don't neglect anything —

Fulgence — Duty is a religion for me as for you.

[*Stands up at the high desk, and starts to work.*]

Antoine — I know it. And I congratulate myself on the choice I made of you for a son-in-law. You are an honest man, Fulgence, a steady, punctual, sensible man. You have nothing, it is true ; but when a man is industrious and modest in his tastes, he is always rich enough.

Fulgence [*writing*] — No doubt. But still —

Antoine — But still what ? My daughter isn't rich. My savings, I have told you, are very small, and I have never allowed M. Vanderke to raise my salary. But with you it is different. You have a rather important place here ; you are better educated and consequently more useful than I. You have been here two years already ; and you will be raised little by little on account of your services.

Fulgence [*coming back to the center*] — I don't insist on it. M. Vanderke has just given his daughter a handsome dowry, and there's his son who has come of age to cut a great dash — and who will perhaps have debts. M. Vanderke pays his clerks well ; when there is overtime, he gives them very square extra wages. It would be an injustice to ask more — and — I should be surprised if it was thought of. [*Sets to work again.*]

Antoine — That's good ; I am as well satisfied with your sentiments as you are with your lot. [*Rising and carrying over to FULGENCE the two accounts the latter gave him on entering.*] You will be boarded and lodged here.

Fulgence [*turning around with some emotion*] — This is too many kindnesses ! Why, I, who am nothing, who have nothing ! I feel ashamed —

Antoine [*coming forward*] — Don't let's talk any more about that. I consider you rich enough with your courage and your work.

Fulgence — You are very disinterested, M. Antoine !

Antoine — I disinterested ? Why shouldn't I be ? Why should I care for money ? Since the time I've been counting it, receiving it, pouring it out ; since it has been passing through my hands and under my eyes, — it is here like a river, — I can't be dazzled with it any more, and when one swims in midstream, he is no longer thirsty. I have a master who is so good, so generous, who, if I said to him one fine day, “Monsieur, I'd like — I'd very much like one of those baskets of money you empty into your safes every day,” he'd answer : “You want that ? Take it, my dear Antoine, take it ! You have earned it well, and it is a pleasure to me to satisfy you.”

Fulgence [*attentive and anxious*] — Ah ! M. Vanderke would say that to you ?

Antoine — Yes indeed ! and I should be rich this minute if I had accepted all he wanted to give me. But he is a man who has so much good to do, and does it with so much pleasure, that when I see him able to render some useful service, or give some handsome present to his children, I'd secretly put in my own money rather than see him deprived of it.

Fulgence [*leaving his place and coming over to ANTOINE*] — You have never explained yourself so fully to me, M. Antoine, and what you tell me does me good. So you haven't the ambition that nearly all parents have for their children ? you have never had a passionate desire your daughter should be rich ?

Antoine — Never ! In that I am the pattern of Monsieur, who wishes nothing for his own but honor and good fame. He would be wretched to the depths of his soul if he thought them covetous. [*Returning to his desk.*] You know his history ?

Fulgence [*returning to his high desk*] — M. Vanderke's history ? Yes. At least I know that he is a Frenchman of rank ; that he is called the Baron de Clavières, that he has a sister who is a marquise, and that he took the name he bears to carry on the business of a Dutch merchant who had rescued him on his ship, and later adopted him, when he was young, poor, and pursued in his own country by the results of a duel.

Antoine — That's it. That's what proves that he has no prejudices of birth. He has considered it nothing derogatory to devote his life to work. You don't see on his houses or his carriages either blazon or crown ; and while many revenue farmers pay to have it on, he who has it makes no display of it. Well, he has no more love for money than he has for titles. He became a merchant from gratitude ; he has remained

a merchant from love of order and activity. He has become rich without desiring anything but to set an example of probity in commerce, and he always has set it. He laughs at the reproaches of his sister and the disdain of his caste, and wants his children to be proud of his principles.

Fulgence [rather disdainfully] — But his son doesn't share them?

Antoine — M. Alexis Vanderke hasn't settled opinions yet, perhaps. He is rather led away by the world, but he is a fine young man, a worthy boy! I love him as if he were my son, and I know he will continue the good work his father is doing. — Hush! there he is!

[During this entire scene ANTOINE is at his desk, FULGENCE standing up to write at his high one. They leave and resume their places while talking, without ceasing to appear occupied.]

SCENE IV.

Alexis [entering by the door at right] — Good morning, father Antoine! [Shakes hands with him and nods to FULGENCE.] Good morning, M. Fulgence. [To ANTOINE.] I have come to ask you for twenty-five louis more: I've got some purchases to make this morning.

Antoine — I'll count it out for you. But I haven't it here — I must go to the safe. [Goes out by door at right.]

SCENE V.

Alexis — Well, M. Fulgence, when does the marriage come off?

Fulgence [coldly, remaining beside his desk] — In a few days, I expect: the last bann has been published.

Alexis — Well, hurry up! for I'm going to Paris, and I'd like to dance at your wedding first.

Fulgence [coldly] — You do me honor.

Alexis — I congratulate you. You are marrying a lovely girl, and a sweet and modest one! I am her foster-brother; her mother was my nurse; we have been brought up together, my sister, she, and I; and — though my sister is very good, Victorine has always been the best of us three. You won't take it ill if I should make her a little wedding present? I am going out for that this morning.

Fulgence [*stiffly*] — What, monsieur! those twenty-five louis —

Alexis [*smiling*] — That doesn't concern you. Only I ought — I prefer to have your permission to offer your fiancée such a thing — and you will grant it?

Fulgence [*in an altered voice*] — Monsieur, if my wife —

Alexis [*laughing constrainedly*] — Ah, you call her your wife already?

Fulgence [*greatly disturbed*] — It is too soon, I admit. If Mlle. Victorine —

Alexis [*confidently*] — Oh, Victorine won't refuse me. When people are happy, they are not proud. They take everything in good part. [*Struck with FULGENCE'S expression.*] You seem annoyed, distressed —

Fulgence — I?

Alexis [*kindly*] — Are you working very hard?

Fulgence — Don't trouble about that, monsieur.

Alexis — But I don't find you with a satisfied and radiant air, as you ought to be; you are not like Victorine — she is gay as a lark, and just now, with my sister, she was laughing at the slightest thing.

Fulgence — Ah, she is with Madame? — she is laughing? Monsieur has seen her already this morning? [*Aside.*] Before me! always!

Alexis — Why, certainly, and I complimented her on her good humor.

Fulgence [*aside*] — Oh, I'll leave this house as soon as I'm married!

SCENE VI.

Antoine [*entering at right, placing the twenty-five louis on his desk, and opening a cash book as he seats himself*] — Here's what you asked me for.

Alexis — Do you enter that?

Antoine — What, monsieur, do I ever forget to enter anything? See, here is your account; I've got everything down to a penny.

Alexis — I don't doubt it. [*Glancing at the register.*] Hah! haven't you added up my past two months' money wrong?

Antoine — I have not closed up the account for those; I am waiting for the end of them.

Alexis — And has my father seen this book?

Antoine — He saw it last month. Every month I show him the balances of the establishment.

Alexis — And he didn't object to anything?

Antoine — No, monsieur.

Alexis — If he thought I was going it too fast — you'd tell me, Antoine?

Antoine — He? You don't know him very well!

Alexis — Well, you, then: if you were dissatisfied with me, you ought to let me know.

Antoine — Are you laughing at me?

Alexis — See here, do you want to spoil me too?

Antoine — Well, and who should be spoiled here if not you, I'd like to know?

Alexis [*placing his hand on Antoine's shoulder*] — To think there are beings worth a thousand times more than we, who make it their duty to render us happy! Have you still your parents, M. Fulgence?

Fulgence — No, monsieur: I hardly knew them.

Alexis — Ah, I commiserate you! You don't know what it is to be loved! — Good-by, Antoine.

[*Gives him his hand and starts to leave.*]

SCENE VII.

Victorine [*entering by the rear*] — Papa, Mme. Vanderke you to come to her immediately, if you please.

Antoine — Ah, ha! I know what that means!

[*Goes out by rear.*]

SCENE VIII.

Alexis — Ah, Victorine, I was just now on the point of reproaching your bridegroom. He has a careworn look. Love makes him sad: it makes you gay, on the contrary. I leave you together to discuss which of the two ways of loving is the best.

[*Goes out by rear.*]

SCENE IX.

Victorine — Why are you sad, Fulgence? is it true what he said?

Fulgence — I am sad when they tell me you are gay.

Victorine — What ! do you want me to be in grief ?

Fulgence — Only you are never gay with me, *Victorine* : you keep that for other people.

Victorine — If you make me sad, it isn't my fault.

Fulgence [*crossing the stage to return a register to Antoine's desk*] — Oh ! no more is it mine.

Victorine — And whose fault is it, then ?

Fulgence [*aside*] — And to think I don't dare explain myself ! she has so sincere an air, so far removed from what's in my mind !

Victorine — Are you sulking at me ? Very well, I'll take my work. [*Seats herself at left.*]

Fulgence — I sulking ! what a mean word you use to me !

Victorine — I was wrong, that's true ; I don't know why I said it to you. It wasn't in my mind.

Fulgence [*approaching her*] — Do you know your own real thoughts, *Victorine* ?

Victorine — Why — I think I do ! But — perhaps not always ! Come, I don't want to be conceited : I am not — what shall I say ? I am not like you, *Fulgence*.

Fulgence — Like me ?

Victorine — Well, yes. I am not sensible, rational, deliberate like you. I don't keep an account with myself in everything, as it seems to me you do. Perhaps I have been too much spoiled in this house, where everybody is so good to me ! They have always let me do and say whatever passed through my head. Then myself, I rather give up to my first impulses without being very well able to explain them. I am cheerful, I am sad, I laugh, I cry ; they make fun of it, my father laughs at me, and I laugh at myself too. [*Rising.*] Well, doesn't that reassure you ? Wouldn't they say that in return for everything good I torment you ? But I don't mean to ! I tell you all this, *Fulgence*, so you mayn't be uneasy about anything.

Fulgence — And yet there is one thing I can't help making me uneasy.

Victorine — Tell me, and if I can correct myself —

Fulgence — Oh, you haven't done anything wrong. You are frank and good, I know ; but you are so beloved and cosseted here, that I am afraid of not making you as happy as you always have been — afraid you will find me too rational, too deliberate, as you say.

Victorine — I have thought that sometimes myself; but I wasn't thinking so that minute. Why do you call it up to me? Wouldn't any one say you wanted to frighten me over the future? Certainly one doesn't marry without some apprehension — but you take my confidence away instead of giving it to me!

Fulgence — Ah, I am a bungler, I know. I can't make tender speeches, and I'm not used to this family life all sweetness, all honey, that has been made for you here. I am gloomy, disagreeable. You can't love me. Tell the truth, Victorine, you don't love me?

Victorine — Not love you? Here you are frightening me all through, Fulgence! Why do you tell me I don't love you?

Fulgence — Because I have never yet dared to ask you, and perhaps you haven't asked yourself.

Victorine — But surely I must love you, as I am going to marry you.

[Antoine enters and listens to them.]

Fulgence — Oh, that's no answer!

Victorine — I think it is! My father likes you and esteems you; I esteem you, too, and I want to love you, since it is my father's will and desire.

SCENE X.

Antoine [entering by the rear with papers, stops to listen, then approaches them, and says] — Victorine is right, and it's she just now that's the wisest of the two.

Fulgence — What, M. Antoine, then you were listening?

Antoine — Why not? I still have the right.

Victorine [kissing him] — Oh, you will always have it! I want you always to know all my thoughts and advise me about everything. Come, tell M. Fulgence that he doesn't know what he is saying.

Antoine — He is in love, and love makes one talk nonsense. You were talking nonsense yourself just now, Victorine; but now you've hit the truth. It isn't necessary for one to go mad with joy on getting married. It is a serious affair, and if only you each have a firm resolution to do your duty, it will all go well. Come, I'm going to tell you a surprise! Make believe not to know anything. M. and Mme. Vanderke, with their daughter, are here to congratulate you and make you wedding

presents. The presents are very costly, I am sure of that beforehand. Don't be affected by their price, but by the meaning put into them and the friendship they are proofs of.

SCENE XI.

Enter by the rear M. and MME. VANDERKE and their daughter SOPHIE, with a Servant carrying pasteboard boxes.

Mme. Vanderke [coming forward and kissing VICTORINE] — My dear child, you are to marry a good youth. I am happy in your happiness, and I beg you to receive your wedding dress from my hand.

[Takes a box from the servant and hands it to VICTORINE.]

Victorine — O madame, how good you are to think of me like that !

Vanderke — And I, my dear daughter, — for I consider you my daughter too, do you understand ? — I don't offer millinery, I shouldn't know how to choose it, but I beg your acceptance of this little pocket-book.

Victorine [taking the pocket-book] — Oh, how handsome it is ! — Thank you, monsieur. How beautifully it is bound ! all gilt ! See here, father ! with my monogram on it !

[Goes over to ANTOINE, puts the box on the table, gives him the pocket-book, and returns to thank VANDERKE.]

Antoine [opening the pocket-book] — But, monsieur — this draft on your funds — it is too much ! it is impossible ! it is a dowry !

[Goes up to VANDERKE.]

Fulgence [aside] — A dowry ! I was sure of it !

Vanderke — Well, oughtn't I to assure your daughter's lot ?

Antoine — But, monsieur, fifty thousand livres ! No, no, it is too much ! your own children —

Mme. Vanderke [holding her daughter's hand] — Antoine, you have no right to refuse. The entire family is associated in the intentions of its head.

Victorine [with emotion] — Oh, I didn't need that, M. Vanderke — madame ! Sophie ! you almost give me pain with this huge present ! Do I need money here ? don't you want me to live here any longer ?

Mme. Vanderke — On the contrary, I count on your staying here as long as we live.

Victorine — Oh, in that case thank you, thank you !

Sophie — But look closely at your wedding dress ! I have added some laces and a small necklace, for I wanted to dress you out too. You were so happy in seeing me fine, three months ago on my wedding day. *[They go up to the table.]*

Victorine *[opening the box and sitting down to look]* — Oh, goodness ! a watered silk, pearls, English point ! — but I shall never dare to wear all that !

Sophie *[handing her another box]* — And here are flowers, ribbons, and gloves from my husband, who will come on in two days to assist at your wedding.

Victorine — Ah, heaven, what fine things ! I shall be in white gloves all the rest of my life !

Mme. Vanderke — We leave you to look at these trifling fineries ; but we wish you, as well as your father and your intended, to come and breakfast with us, in order to fix the great day. — Do you hear, M. Fulgence ?

Fulgence *[starting out of a deep reverie]* — Madame — it is too much honor. *[Aside.]* A dowry !

Vanderke *[to his wife and daughter]* — Go on and wait for me, my dears. I will be with you in a moment with Antoine and Fulgence, whom I am taking to the store. I have to give some orders.

[Goes out with ANTOINE and FULGENCE, right.]

Sophie — Are you coming, Victorine ? We are to breakfast in my room to-day, you know.

Victorine *[rising]* — Yes, yes, immediately, immediately. I'll put away and lock up all my treasures, and then follow you.

[MME. VANDERKE goes out rear with her daughter, to whom she gives her arm.]

SCENE XII.

Victorine *[alone, standing beside the table]* — Watered silk ! pearls ! oh, how heavy they are ! they are fine, I'll answer for it. English point lace ! And money, a lot of money ! *[Picks up everything and lets it drop again.]* Oh, I shall be so rich, so handsome, so happy ! — and Fulgence loves me lots ! *[Grows sadder and sadder.]* And my father is so contented ! It's singular, I'm choking ! *[Sits down in Antoine's chair.]* Is it joy ? — I feel — oh, how bad it makes you feel to be contented like this !

SCENE XIII.

Alexis [without being seen at rear door] — She's crying ! Why, what is it ? could she be in grief at being married ? [Approaching.] If I thought so ! [Aloud.] Victorine ! are you crying !

Victorine [rising, choked] — Ah, good heavens, don't tell of it, don't tell of it ! my father is so angry when I cry !

Alexis — Then you cry often ?

Victorine — No, sometimes. [Wiping her eyes.] It's all over ! it's nothing, there !

Alexis — But what ails you ?

Victorine — Nothing.

Alexis — Do you cry for nothing ?

Victorine — It seems so.

Alexis — Then you are a little out of your head ?

Victorine [smiling] — Maybe.

Alexis — Fulgence —

Victorine — Well, Fulgence —

Alexis — Fulgence is kind, honest, well educated ; he has a handsome face, he is young — he pleases you, doesn't he ?

Victorine — Oh yes, he pleases me very well.

Alexis — In short, it isn't your marriage that's making you unhappy ?

Victorine — Oh no, it hasn't any reason ; but the idea of marriage always makes me want to cry. If it were with another, it would be the same thing.

Alexis — Truly ?

Victorine — Truly !

Alexis [aside, with a little sigh] — Oh, well ! [Aloud.] Come, my little Victorine, my little sister, you mustn't spoil your eyes ; and besides, if you are sad as that, I shall not dare give you my congratulations and my present — for I have brought you mine in my turn. [Looking at the pasteboard boxes and drawing a small one from his pocket.] I see I have come last, but it is the fault of the workman who made me wait.

Victorine — You have brought me a trinket ? Ah, that is something I can wear always — all the better !

Alexis — I shall be very proud of that, if it pleases you. Look !

Victorine [opening the box] — Oh, your watch ! your beautiful repeater ! the one that passed a night with me, the eve of

your duel ! Ah, what a memory of sorrow — and of happiness too ! for after that wretched night when I never closed an eye — because I knew you were going to fight — what a joy the next day to see you come back sound and safe ! We were all so happy ! Oh, I thank you for having thought of giving me that ! But what will your sister say ? for this is her present to you.

Alexis — And so I had one made exactly like it before giving you this. There, look ! it's so my sister may not know —

Victorine — But still it wouldn't be right to deceive your sister.

Alexis [*starting to exchange the watches, says in a slightly reproachful tone*] — If it means nothing to you —

Victorine [*holding back the watch, sadly*] — If ! — it means a great deal to me ! I shall love the old one ever so much better — you left it in my care the night of the duel ! You said to me, “ You are not to give it up *except to me, to me, you understand ?* ” You wanted to leave it to me as a memento, in case you — Thank God I could give it back to you ! But how are we to do ? you ought not to create a separation with it — your sister is more than I am !

Alexis — Aren't you my sister too ? Sophie isn't jealous of you ! Wouldn't she approve the exchange if I should tell her ?

Victorine — Oh, yes, the duel has stayed a secret between your father and you, between my father and me — and Fulgence. — Oh ! so I can tell Fulgence that it is your alarm-watch !

Alexis [*slightly disturbed*] — Fulgence ? — But — [*With sudden frankness.*] Why, yes, yes, certainly ! why not ? Come, take it, please !

Victorine [*fastening on the watch*] — Ah, how contented I am ! There now, it seems to me I see you in seeing myself with that watch !

[*Dances about joyfully.*]

Alexis — So you're laughing now ! Well, I'm quite contented myself to have brought back cheerfulness to you !

SCENE XIV.

Antoine [*entering by the right with FULGENCE, who goes straight to his high desk*] — In good spirits ? Good enough, Victorine !

Victorine — See here, papa ! see here, Fulgence ! the beautiful watch M. Alexis has just given me. [FULGENCE starts.]

Antoine — They are spoiling you, they are making you vain. You are wrong, M. Vanderke.

Alexis — Don't scold me. I am so pleased to see her laugh and dance ! Come, they are waiting for all four of us to a family breakfast : will you come ?

Victorine — Oh, how I shall make Madame laugh with my watch ! I'll make it strike all the quarters, all the minutes, till they tell me, " Victorine, you're making my head split."

Alexis — Will you give me your arm ?

Victorine — Yes, yes ; but I don't want to go before papa.

Antoine — Ladies always go first !

Victorine — I am not a lady : I won't go before my father !

Antoine — And if I won't go before M. Vanderke ?

Alexis — There's only one way of arranging it. Take my other arm, my dear Antoine, and we'll all three go out — as we can !

SCENE XV.

Fulgence [*alone, following them*] — This high spirits with him, this melancholy with me ! — these presents ! — this dowry ! Ah, doubt and anger are gnawing at my heart ! [*Goes out.*]

ACT II.

Drawing-room at Vanderke's, Louis XIV. style ; fireplace at rear center ; left rear, door leading into an antechamber ; right rear, glass door opening on the garden. Left, first wing, a window, and a little forward of it a center-table and chairs. On each side of the stage, consoles with candelabra, first wing. Side doors in second wing.

SCENE I.

Vanderke [*entering left rear with papers in hand, to ALEXIS*] — No, my dear boy, I am not in pain, and as your sister asked us to pass the morning in her room, you will find me again here.

Alexis — If you need to be alone on account of some business that is bothering you —

Vanderke — Oh, in our calling there is always some subject of uneasiness. The Harris & Morrison house is giving me some apprehensions.

Alexis — Those Americans who opened considerable credits with you ?

Vanderke — Yes. I was advised to look sharp, and still it was repugnant to me to shut off credit from honest men whom distrust might hasten ruin for. But I don't know why I talk to you about that : these are things not very refreshing to a young man thinking of having a good time, and besides, all foresight is of very little service here. It is weakness to fret yourself in advance over dangers that cannot be averted, and perhaps all human wisdom consists in knowing how to await good and evil with patience. Go and finish your meal, my boy.

Alexis — Allow me to remain with you, father : it is so rare that you have a leisure morning, and I see you so little. I am much in fault, after all : I ought to help you in your work, share your anxieties—and you have plenty of reason to find fault with my good times.

Vanderke — I find no fault with you, my boy : each age to its own. I think no harm of your wanting to see Paris [*to MME. VANDERKE, who enters at left rear*], and your mother shares my feeling — she who always sacrifices her own contentment to yours.

SCENE II.

Mme. Vanderke — Ah, you are talking of that Paris journey ? He still desires it, then ?

Alexis — I do desire it, I admit ; and yet if I searched my mind thoroughly, perhaps I should still more desire to stay here.

Vanderke — We shall carefully refrain from trying to influence you. You desire to take the air of the world a little, as the saying is ; you are like all young people, you blush to be still a provincial ?

Alexis — No, father. A man is not a provincial when he is a lieutenant in the navy, and when at twenty-five he has already seen the two Indies. But they say that Paris sums up all the earth, and it seems to me that after having seen it, I should have no more anxiety to make the tour of the world.

Mme. Vanderke — You are free, my child, and however sweet your presence would be to me, no more than your father will I oppose journeys useful for your instruction. My health is reëstablished at last, thanks to your kind cares. And nevertheless, if Paris satiated your curiosity ; if, after

having seen it, you could give up distant expeditions ! Ah ! I recall what anguish I suffered when the wind blew on our coasts or a cloud formed on the horizon.

Alexis — Poor dear mother ! You borrow so much trouble ! — Come, father, I must quit the navy and apply myself more seriously to your trade.

Vanderke — Then you are not converted to the ideas of your aunt the marquise, Mr. chevalier ?

Alexis — No, and every day I am converted to yours. I cannot blush for what confers honor on your name, and I wish to follow the career you walk in. You need me, since my sister has married a man of the gown, a stranger to our occupations. Come, come, I must get married, so as to become quiet, sedentary, attached to family life : everybody here will be happy over it, and I more than anybody else, I am certain.

Mme. Vanderke — Ah, if it were true !

Vanderke — We will think of that when you like. But it is not for me to hunt up a dowry for you : it is for you to hunt up a wife. I am not in favor of those marriages which are treated as a business, and which the heart, the consideration of domestic happiness, does not enter into. I know that love matches have a bad reputation ; but for myself [*taking his wife's hand*], I made one so happy that I understand no other.

Alexis — Oh, I am quite of your opinion, father, and fortune (we have enough of that!) will never decide me. I should fail in playing the wit and the fine gentleman : I feel my tastes to be simple and modest in style and fashion. I feel myself your son, and I am so proud of it that I shall have strength to bear the gibes of the stylish crowd. I am curious to see how that class set about ruining their family, their character, their health, their reputation, with so much pains and care, when it is so easy to be an honest man and a happy one ; and then I shall be impatient to return here to end my days calmly beside the woman who chooses me, handsome as my sister, good as my mother.

Vanderke — It is pretty soon to think of ending your days, boy. See the world first ! As you have the desire for it, it is because you feel the need of it. I prefer to have you see the world with your eyes rather than mine, and to have you know it before you shut yourself down to domestic life. Go to Paris ; we'll talk about the establishment on your return, if you are still of the same mind.

Alexis [dreamily and undecidedly] — Perhaps you are right, father. I am rather young — perhaps I should not be worthy of my happiness. And yet, when you were married, you were younger than I am, and you had no occasion to repent of it.

Vanderke — That is true : but I was poor, condemned to work ; I wasn't a brilliant son of family, a spoiled child.

SCENE III.

Enter by left rear SOPHIE, VICTORINE, FULGENCE, ANTOINE, chatting familiarly in groups.

Sophie — We have talked a lot about marriage, toilette, balls ; we have chattered passably, and yet we haven't decided anything still.

Mme. Vanderke — That is true, but we could not decide without your father.

Vanderke [seating himself at right] — Well, come then, Antoine, what is it that still delays the marriage of these children ?

Antoine — Why, nothing, monsieur. Everything is ready. They are waiting till you fix the day.

Victorine — Oh, are they waiting to fix the day ?

Alexis — One would say it put you out ! Don't you know I am going to have a shower of rockets all through the town — to burn my ruffles, as my father said ? Don't you want to set fire to the bouquet [*finest piece*] ?

Victorine — Oh no ! it would make me too much afraid.

Vanderke — Look here, to-day is the 27th.

Victorine — Already ! I thought it was only the 25th.

Vanderke — It is the 27th. Let us fix the marriage for the 30th.

Antoine — The 30th be it !

Victorine — The 30th ! a Friday ! Oh, that is a bad day, that brings bad luck !

Mme. Vanderke — And besides, it's a fast day !

Victorine — And so is Saturday !

Vanderke — Well, let's put it over to Sunday, which will be the 2d of the month, five days from now.

Victorine — Five days ! so soon !

Antoine — But it's got to be decided !

Fulgence [who has been watching VICTORINE] — Allow me, M. Antoine. [*To VANDERKE.*] Pardon me, monsieur, but

Mlle. Victorine seems opposed to your urgency, and I would not wish imposed on her —

Vanderke — That is good of you, Fulgence ; it is devotion, submission. It is a proof of love that can be appreciated. Modesty must not be nagged, that is true. We must respect it, be tender with it, convince it.

Antoine — But, sir —

Vanderke [*rising*] — You should not meddle any more in this. But since on account of my son's near departure our plans must be settled to-day, let us leave this engaged couple together and take a walk in the garden. We shall be back directly, my dears, and you will tell us the day you have chosen by mutual agreement.

Sophie — That's right, father ; you always give advice and example of condescension to our sex.

Vanderke [*offering his arm to his wife*] — Respect what you love. I always find it such a comfort.

[*They go out into the garden. VANDERKE makes ANTOINE pass before him ; he goes with his wife ; SOPHIE follows them, and at the moment of disappearance signs to ALEXIS to come with his parents ; ALEXIS, whose eyes have been fixed on VICTORINE, makes her a sign of adieu and goes out.*]

SCENE IV.

Fulgence — Come, listen, mademoiselle : you are very reluctant to take a husband — and I myself —

Victorine [*eagerly*] — Oh ! and so are you, aren't you ?

Fulgence — I — I was hiding my thoughts from you ; I hoped to stifle them, conquer them : but I am suffering too much, and to hold myself in any longer would be dissimulating with you. I don't want to, I ought not to. I love you, Victorine, certainly I love you ; so don't take what I'm going to tell you in bad part.

Victorine — Then tell it quickly !

Fulgence — I want — I don't want, certainly not, to give you up — and yet —

Victorine [*attentively*] — And yet —

Fulgence — And yet — I'd like to change something in your dreams of the future. If I were an unprincipled man, I could deceive you : pretend to submit to everything, and the day after the marriage say to you, "This is my will." But that

would be bad faith, you would hate me, and I should have deserved it. So I want to tell you in advance, and if it seems unacceptable to you — well, I will submit, I will suffer — I will renounce the happiness I had flattered myself with.

Victorine — And what would be your will if we were married?

Fulgence [*with an effort*] — It would be to quit this house, this Vanderke family, this country, and go and live with you in a foreign land, or at the other end of France.

Victorine [*quickly*] — Oh, that — never, never!

Fulgence — That is what I was afraid of, that is what I was certain of, that is what crushes me; but I would rather know what I can rely on.

Victorine — Oh, and so do I!

SCENE V.

ANTOINE and VANDERKE reënter through the garden.

Antoine — Huh! they're in the sulks! [*To VANDERKE.*] I told you so, monsieur — that they wouldn't come to any understanding.

Vanderke — Is that so? Come, children, we are here to try and bring you into accord.

Victorine — Oh, M. Vanderke, we are entirely in accord: we can't marry each other, that's all.

Antoine [*growls*] — Oh, see that! that's something new!

Victorine — Don't let's dispute over it: it doesn't make us enemies. He has nothing to reproach me with, and I have no grudge at all against him. He is frank, and so am I, that's how it is.

Antoine — But good Lord! what's the matter? Will you explain yourself, Fulgence?

Fulgence — M. Antoine, it is very painful in M. Vanderke's presence.

Vanderke [*gently*] — If it is necessary, I will go away.

Victorine [*holding him back*] — No, monsieur, no! you are the head, the judge, the father, the master, for everybody here. I want him to say before you what he said to me — for I'll say it myself!

Fulgence — You are right, mademoiselle; and since there is no more hope — [*To VANDERKE, firmly.*] Monsieur, I do not intend to remain in your service if I marry Mlle. Victorine.

Victorine — Do you hear that? He wants to leave you, he wants to make me leave my country, my family, your house where I was born, where I was brought up, where I feel in my own house, I am so happy. He would carry me far off, far off from you, from my father, from Madame — from Sophie! In short, he would make me die of grief, and it isn't what was agreed with my father; it isn't what was accepted. He recognizes it, and consequently our marriage is broken off.

Antoine [*who has been watching FULGENCE and VICTORINE and become gloomy*] — Softly, my girl, not so fast! Your marriage can't be broken off like that. It is written that the wife shall leave her father and her mother to follow her husband, and you'll follow yours if it is the will of yours!

Victorine — Leave Mr. Vanderke's family and house? leave you, father? Oh, you wouldn't have me!

Antoine — You won't be leaving me by that — I'll follow you.

Victorine [*clinging to VANDERKE's arm*] — You would leave M. Vanderke? — Oh, monsieur, monsieur, my father can't leave you! you couldn't do without my father!

Vanderke [*who has also become very attentive to the faces of FULGENCE and ANTOINE*] — M. Fulgence, will you tell me honestly why you wish to leave my house, and the very country I live in, as if you had a horror of the friendship I evince towards you, and the services I can render you? Explain yourself clearly, and have no fear that I shall take offense at your reasons, if they are good ones.

Fulgence — Monsieur, if I were to remain a boy, there is nowhere I should be better off than with you. I render homage to your character; but shall I fail in the respect I owe you if I keep my reasons to myself?

Vanderke — Certainly you have that right, but I appeal to your confidence. — Antoine and Victorine, leave me alone with him. But don't go far away, for I may want to speak to you directly.

Antoine — Oh, monsieur, and I want to speak to this young lady, too!

[*Takes VICTORINE's arm in his own rather roughly, and goes out into the garden with her. VICTORINE casts a look of distress at VANDERKE.*]

SCENE VI.

Vanderke [to FULGENCE, who is somewhat abstracted] — Well, here we are alone, Fulgence, and I think it will do you good to open your heart and ask advice of a man double your age, and perhaps better able to judge of certain things in life.

Fulgence — Ah, M. Vanderke, your kindness touches me — I believe in your wisdom — but don't insist — no! I can't tell you anything.

Vanderke — Then I'll try to guess. Your position here may seem too unimportant, and you are afraid of not being able to raise a family on the wages —

Fulgence — No, monsieur, no! That is what mortifies me, that you should suspect me of interested views, when it is just the contrary, when I am ashamed — and, I must say, disquieted, — wounded, at the dowry you have given Victorine to-day.

Vanderke [studying him attentively] — Disquieted! wounded! why so? Don't you know that Antoine has been my servant, my companion, and my friend for thirty years? that we have suffered and struggled together? that he has given me a thousand proofs of his fidelity and his virtue? and finally, that in a duel my son had, he wished to attack his adversary and get killed, to force the other to fly the country? You think it surprising, disquieting to your honor [dwelling on the word], that I give a modest dowry to such a man's daughter.

Fulgence [aside] — My honor! He seems to read my very thoughts.

Vanderke — Well, have you no answer? What is there extraordinary in it?

Fulgence [shaken] — Nothing, monsieur; oh, certainly, nothing! I am too proud — but what can I say to you? [bitterly] benefits humiliate me!

Vanderke — The worse for you! I don't like to have my good intentions distrusted without cause.

Fulgence — Without cause!

Vanderke — Then tell what your distrust is about, come!

Fulgence — I — I have no distrust of you, monsieur: that would be ingratitude, I feel it. But what's the use! I can't change myself. I would rather my wife should owe her comfort, the pleasures of her youth and the security of her old age, to me alone. I would rather be her one support, her sole friend! I was born jealous! — yes, I am so of what I love, and I am so

in what seems to you perhaps the most insignificant things. I don't know whether I should ever dare to call Victorine *thou*, I respect her so much ; and here everybody indulges in that familiarity. In a word, she is so cosseted and beloved in this house, that her affections could never concentrate themselves on me, and I should be full of secret rage at not being the only one devoted to her happiness.

Vanderke — I understand you, monsieur, I understand you perfectly.

Fulgence — And do you blame me?

Vanderke — Not at all. Exclusive and absolute tenderness is the most sacred right of love and marriage. I shall not try, then, to turn you aside from your resolutions ; but the young Victorine ought to love you enough to accept them without regret. I advise you, then, to delay your marriage with her until you can inspire her with confidence enough in you to accept them with joy and devotion.

Fulgence — Ah, monsieur ! you have saved me ! I thank you, I bless you, and I will follow your advice.

[*VANDERKE gives him his hand ; FULGENCE presses it with emotion, bowing slightly, but without giving himself up completely.*]

SCENE VII.

Antoine [reëntering by way of the garden] — Well, monsieur?

Vanderke — Well, Antoine, I think the marriage will have to be delayed.

Antoine — Pardon me, pardon me, M. Vanderke, you do everything for the best ; but you don't know all the circumstances. Victorine, whom I have just been talking seriously with, has listened to reason. She loves Fulgence well enough to consent to everything : she will be married next Sunday, she will go off with him the week after. I have promised to follow her and settle her wherever it will be convenient for her husband to fix, and then come back and put your affairs in order, so I can go and live near my daughter and my son-in-law.

Fulgence — Good heavens ! Is this true, M. Antoine?

Vanderke — Fulgence, go back to work. Be calm, control your emotions. We shall see each other again soon.

[*FULGENCE goes out by the antechamber.*]

SCENE VIII.

Vanderke [*with emotion*] — Antoine, then you want to leave me too?

Antoine — Leave you? Never! at least not unless you drive me out.

Vanderke — Then you are deceiving your daughter?

Antoine — I've got to! If I didn't promise to go and live near her, she'd never follow her husband.

Vanderke — So her greatest, her truest sorrow would be to separate from her father?

Antoine — Beyond question, for after my promise she made no further resistance.

Vanderke — But have you weighed well the reasons that Fulgence thinks he has for leaving us? Do you know them?

Antoine [*uneasily*] — No.

Vanderke — And yet you would seem to understand them perfectly, as you have yielded to them without even asking for them.

Antoine [*embarrassed*] — What can I do, so long as it's his notion? You can get him a place in some solid mercantile house where he'll make a good living; he won't be so free or happy there as he is here, but so long as it's his notion!

Vanderke [*watching him closely*] — You take your part in this separation, the absence of your daughter, very lightly.

Antoine [*sadly*] — Pshaw! so long as it's Victorine's notion!

Vanderke — Oh, it isn't Victorine's notion: it's yours, Antoine.

Antoine [*rather impatiently*] — Well, so long as it's my notion!

Vanderke — Antoine, you don't wish to tell me anything, but I know it all.

Antoine [*disturbed*] — You know, you know — What is it you know? There's nothing to know, confound it. There's nothing, nothing!

Vanderke — There is this — that Fulgence is jealous. Isn't that anything?

Antoine — Has he told you he's jealous? He doesn't know what he's talking about! He can't be jealous! And who could it be of? Who did he say?

Vanderke — He has said nothing, but I understood; I ought to have understood sooner, guessed, foreseen. You

ought to have foreseen and guessed sooner, too ! Antoine, you love me too well !

Antoine — What ? How so ?

Vanderke — Yes, rather than enlighten my perceptions, you would let me be an ingrate to you !

Antoine [*in grief*] — I don't understand you, but I see you are finding fault with me because I care more for you than for anybody else in the world, and that isn't right on your part.

Vanderke — You ought not to care more for me than for your daughter : you have more sacred duties toward her than toward me ; you are responsible to God for her virtue and her happiness, much more than for my interests and my peace of mind.

Antoine — Well, in short, you mean to tell me —

Vanderke — I shall tell you nothing, since you have secrets from me ! I shall speak to —

Antoine — To my daughter ? Oh no, don't ! please don't ! Not a word that can make Victorine think you or I could have that in mind.

Vanderke [*in surprise*] — I had no intention of talking to Victorine. It is my son I am going to question sharply.

Antoine — Your son ! Is that your idea ? You mean to talk to him — to set him thinking — to make him guess — ? Oh no ! oh no ! he mustn't have the least idea —

Vanderke — Why, of what ?

Antoine [*embarrassed*] — Of — of what you are thinking of !

Vanderke — Of Fulgence's jealousy ?

Antoine [*quickly*] — Yes, yes, that's it, of Fulgence's jealousy.. It's crazy, just crazy, and if we mix ourselves up in it we shall make it worse.

Vanderke — Then my son has not noticed it ?

Antoine — How should he have noticed it ? Is it his fault if M. Fulgence is jealous ?

Vanderke — And Victorine — ?

Antoine [*with an effort*] — No more does Victorine suspect it.

Vanderke — That fully proves that my son has never spoken a word to her that could make her think he looked on her with other eyes than a brother's. Still, Victorine has a great deal of melancholy !

Antoine [*carrying back to right rear the fauteuil which was at the front on the same side*] — Oh, if she is melancholy, it's bad :

but people don't die of that! You'd spoil her for me if I let you do it! She must leave here, indeed she must!

Vanderke — She must? One moment! It hasn't been proved to me yet — Go and find Alexis for me.

Antoine — What are you going to do?

Vanderke — You will see! Go on, go ahead!

[Antoine hesitatingly goes out into the garden.]

SCENE IX.

Vanderke [alone] — No, my son is not guilty, but perhaps — feelings which neither he nor Victorine admit to themselves — if Antoine should be blind! that excellent man is as devoted to me as a faithful dog! That is beautiful, it is good, but it is more than any man owes to one like himself; too much affection may mislead the judgment, and I ought not to leave the decision here to any one but myself —

SCENE X.

ANTOINE enters first, followed by ALEXIS.

Antoine — Here is your son. Ought I —

Vanderke [standing, leaning against a console] — You ought to hear what I have to say to him. *[Antoine remains at the rear, leaning against the fireplace, watching VANDERKE and ALEXIS with a sort of stupor. VANDERKE, to ALEXIS.]* My dear boy, the business I talked with you about just now will have serious consequences, and I think you can help me conjure them away.

Alexis — Command me, father! Here I am, all ready.

Vanderke — Then set out for Paris this very instant.

Alexis [trembling] — This very instant?

Vanderke [with mild gravity] — Do you hesitate? Is it displeasing to you?

Alexis — Hesitate to obey you? Never! but I was not prepared to leave you to-day, so abruptly! — I will go and make my preparations.

Vanderke [meaningly] — Take nothing but a valise: you will be sent all you need for the whole time of your sojourn in Paris.

Alexis — For the entire time? Do you insist on my remaining a long time, father?

Vanderke — My business and your enjoyments will take fully two months. Didn't you count on staying there two months?

Alexis — I have been thinking it would be very long away from my mother and away from you!

Vanderke — Have you any particular reason for modifying your projects so? [*Significantly, and going up to him.*] If there were, you would let me know it, me first? — me, who am, and always want to be, your best friend?

Alexis — Oh, certainly, father: you alone.

Vanderke — Think it over. I will make out your letters of credit, and if you have something to say to me, you will find me here directly.

[*Goes out slowly by rear door, and turns back before disappearing, to look at ALEXIS and ANTOINE.*]

SCENE XI.

Antoine [*starting to follow VANDERKE*] — I'll go and pack your valise.

Alexis [*stopping him*] — Antoine, what ails Victorine?

Antoine — Why do you ask that, monsieur?

Alexis — Because I just saw her going into the garden with my sister; her eyes were brimming with tears, and she wouldn't speak a word to me.

Antoine — Pshaw! Victorine is like all girls. Don't you see her cry for the least thing? for a little impatience I have shown with her, for a kiss your sister has forgotten to give her, for a bird flown away, for a lost ribbon — what can I do? she is such a child!

Alexis — Yes, she was crying the other day over a ribbon I had brought her and you had taken away, so she declares.

Antoine [*annoyed*] — Lord, yes! see there! a fringed ribbon, as if she ought to wear fringes! She is such a coquette!

[*Makes a step to leave; ALEXIS places himself in front and detains him.*]

Alexis — No, Antoine, Victorine is not in the least a coquette.

Antoine [*meaningly, and coming forward again*] — She has become one since she has had a lover.

Alexis [*coming over to ANTOINE*] — Then she is very much in love?

Antoine — Why, it is quite permissible for a sober girl to love her lover !

Alexis — If you were mistaken — if —

Antoine — That's nobody's affair but mine, M. Alexis !

Alexis — That is true — but the interest I bear —

Antoine — All right, all right, monsieur ; thank you. .

Alexis — You have nothing to thank me for : it is my duty. You are so devoted to us ! Your family is mine — it is but one, one same family ! Victorine's unhappiness would be yours, and consequently our own !

Antoine — But Victorine won't be unhappy, monsieur : I answer to you for it.

Alexis — No doubt, if she loves Fulgence. You know him well, of course ?

Antoine — You know as well as I do that he is a perfectly honorable man.

Alexis — I was absent when he came here. Has it been — has it been a long time that Victorine has had an affection for him ?

Antoine — M. Alexis ! — a young girl's feelings — that is so delicate a matter that I, her father, should never dare ask her the questions you ask me. It is my duty to guess them — and encourage them when I think them well placed. Victorine is surer of herself than she seems, and I know very well she doesn't wish any other husband than the one I have given my word to. 167253

Alexis — Quite so. Pardon me, Antoine, if I have been indiscreet. At the moment of leaving you, as I shall not assist at Victorine's marriage — shall not be here any longer to take part in the joys or the sadnesses of the family — it was perhaps allowable to witness my solicitude.

Antoine — I am grateful for it, monsieur, very grateful. I like you very much, you know it ! I am sorry you are going off so soon, but — it must be very necessary, since your father says so, and — you will soon be weaned away from us, thank God !

Alexis — Not so much as you think, perhaps !

Antoine — Pshaw ! pshaw ! you'll see so many fine things, and high flyers ! You'll go to shows and promenades ; you'll have your men and your horses ! Ah, you'll be pointed out, though ! And there are not so many young fellows with as handsome a face as yours, down there !

Alexis [*sadly*] — Good Antoine ! Come, I'll go and get my father's orders, since I've got to leave. [*Goes out at left rear.*]

SCENE XII.

Antoine [*alone*] — And Monsieur who would have encouraged him to stay ! Monsieur who would have consented — Ah, my master, what a man you are ! It doesn't make me love you more, for that isn't possible ; but it makes me still firmer in my duty ! To abuse such goodness ! I'd rather — I'd rather die of grief !

SCENE XIII.

Enter SOPHIE and VICTORINE, from the garden.

Sophie — Oh, I was going to look for you, Antoine ! I don't know what ails Victorine ; I can't console her. She is in trouble, I see, great trouble ! Come, Victorine, tell your father now why you are crying.

Antoine [*low, to VICTORINE, taking her aside, front wing*] — Have you told her you were going away ? I forbade you to !

Victorine — No, no, I haven't said anything about it !

Antoine — And don't tell it to-morrow either !

Sophie — Why, Antoine, are you scolding her instead of consoling her ?

Antoine — Crotchets, babyishness ! Pardon me, madame, I have not time — Monsieur needs me. [*Aside, as he goes out.*] Oh, everybody weakens, and I don't know who to listen to !
[*Goes out at rear door.*]

SCENE XIV.

Sophie — Well, you won't insist, then ? Ah ! I admire your submission, I should rather say your weakness, your indifference.

Victorine — Oh, mademoiselle !

Sophie — In the first place, I am no longer mademoiselle, and I will never be "madame" to you. I am Sophie, Sophie whom you love very little, whom you don't love at all any more, since you love that Fulgence so much !

Victorine — Good heavens ! I am doing my best to love him, and you know very well that —



Sophie — That what? Answer me now! If you don't love him, you mustn't marry him. Ah! if I had not loved my husband, I never would have let myself make the change: too much submission to our parents may lead us to make unhappiness even for them. Do you think your father would be satisfied if he saw you desperate, perhaps guilty?

Victorine — Guilty! I guilty?

Sophie — Yes, one can become that when she doesn't love her husband. She may love in spite of herself.

Victorine — Another — another, but I shouldn't love another — what are you telling me, Sophie?

Sophie — I don't want you to let yourself be sacrificed, and you won't defend yourself at all!

Victorine — But since my father says it must be —

SCENE XV.

Enter M. and MME. VANDERKE and ALEXIS by door at left.

Mme. Vanderke [to her husband] — What, my dear, you are hastening our boy's departure? He isn't to assist at Victorine's marriage, which was going to be a festival!

Vanderke — Forgive me for causing you sorrow, but it is business where honor is engaged.

Sophie [stupefied] — My brother going?

[VICTORINE is petrified.]

Alexis — Yes, my dear sister — yes, mother, I am going. My father wishes it, and I ought not to regret anything when I have the happiness of being able to be of use to him.

Mme. Vanderke — Well, come and kiss me then! You are a good boy!

Sophie — But you won't be absent long?

Vanderke — He will be away perhaps two months.

Victorine — Two months!

Alexis [seeing ANTOINE enter carrying a valise and ALEXIS' cloak and hat] — Everything is ready, father: you have no more orders to give me?

Vanderke — You will stop one day at Beauvais with M. Surmont, who will advise you as to the business I talked with you about, and if necessary you can send me an express — a reliable man.

Alexis — Good-by, father. [Embraces him and then goes to the others.] My dear mother, my dear Sophie.

Mme. Vanderke — We'll go with you as far as your carriage.

Alexis — Well, Victorine, aren't you going to say anything to me? Are you sulking at me? Ah, if I lack words, it is wholly in spite of myself. Come, give me your hand. I shall find you married on my return.

Victorine — Ah, monsieur, I shall not be here any more, I shall never see you any more!

Alexis — What are you saying? You are dreaming!

Antoine — You know very well she is crazy!

Alexis — What! are you actually out of your head, Victorine? Answer me now, come, are you going to make up a face like that for me? Do you think I don't need any courage, every time I leave such good parents, and our dear house where every one is so nice — and you who are so charming when you don't pout? Good-by again, mother. [*VANDERKE makes a sign to him.*] Yes, yes, father, I'm going. You'll write to me, Sophie? Antoine, you'll tell me all about the marriage? Come! [*To VICTORINE.*] Come, smile at me. You see very well I'm whistling to keep my courage up so as to get strength to leave. Be a little cheerful for me, so I may find consolation telling myself you are contented. [*Abstractedly taking his cloak, which ANTOINE, uneasy and impatient, has been offering him for some moments.*] There, think of your silk dress, of your necklace, of your watch, and on your wedding day you can think of my aunt the marquise, and you can have your train carried by the little negro boy I brought back. Laugh, now — now laugh a little — There, altogether!

Victorine [*with a nervous laugh*] — Yes, yes, I'll laugh heartily — I'll make myself very handsome — I'll think of you — of your aunt — I'll give myself airs — I'll have a negro! — Mlle. Sophie will write you everything — and you'll laugh down there — you'll laugh, won't you?

Alexis — See her laughing! that's fine! Thank you, Victorine. Good-by, good-by, all!

Mme. Vanderke — Let us follow you!

[*All go out except VICTORINE and SOPHIE, who come forward again.*]

SCENE XVI.

VICTORINE keeps on laughing with a wandering air: then sobs, screams, and falls in a faint on the fauteuil, at the left near the center-table. SOPHIE instantly runs forward to her.

Sophie — Good heavens! what is it? Victorine! ah, then I wasn't mistaken? And he's gone! [*Lifts up VICTORINE.*]

ACT III.

Scene: SOPHIE'S room. Same decoration as second act. It is night outside. The drawing-room is lit by candles placed on brackets.

SCENE I.

Present: VANDERKE and SOPHIE.

Sophie [seated near the center-table, working tapestry] — Ah, father, if on the eve of my wedding I had been as melancholy and agitated as she has been for a week, you would never have consented —

Vanderke [seated on the other side of the center-table] — My dear child, the circumstances are different, and the characters still more so. You combine firmness with gentleness ; while Victorine is weak and irresolute.

Sophie — But if my brother —

Vanderke — What ! your brother ?

Sophie — Ah, father dear, you understand me quite well, for you made him go away.

Vanderke — Take care, my dear — take care of what you think and of what you say.

Sophie — Then would it be a crime on my brother's part to love Victorine, and madness on mine to believe that you would consent ?

Vanderke — My dear Sophie, it isn't one of the marriages unequal before God. A subordinate like Antoine is a friend, and I have brought you up with the idea that Victorine was your companion and your equal.

Sophie — Well then, father ?

Vanderke — Well, my child, the world, which has sound and estimable beliefs, common to all classes of society, has also empty and cruel prejudices which it is fine to combat ; but to combat them, one must be strong. Your brother will be so one day, I am confident ; but he is still very young and hardly knows himself. I know that a great passion, a noble love, inspire mighty devotions ; but this great passion your brother has never experienced.

Sophie — And yet there has been a real change in him since the day when the question of marrying Victorine was brought

up. Until then, he did not care for her except in the way of friendship. From the day when she was promised to Fulgence, my brother has kept talking about leaving the navy, of getting married ; he has had a craving to go away, a craving to stay here, a need to see Paris to distract himself — need of opening his heart to you — I have seen it all !

Vanderke — But in place of opening his heart, he has gone away. Even if we admit that he had some fleeting thought of love for Victorine, he has stifled it ; and not feeling himself very seriously enamored, he has obeyed the voice of honor which commanded him to depart. [*Rises.*

Sophie — That is true. Ah, my poor Victorine !

SCENE II.

Antoine [*entering from the anteroom with a flat candlestick in his hand*] — Pardon me, madame, if I take the liberty of disturbing Monsieur even as far as your room ; but this is a letter for him that I have just found on my desk, and that seems pressing.

Sophie [*rising and going toward her chamber door, which is that at the left*] — Read it, read it, father ! Stay here, Antoine : I am going into my chamber to attend Victorine.

[*Goes out.* ANTOINE *extinguishes his candle and puts the candlestick on the mantel at rear.*

SCENE III.

Vanderke [*preoccupied, holding his letter without looking at it*] — Well, Antoine, are all the preparations for the wedding finished ?

Antoine — Yes, monsieur. At nine precisely, to-morrow morning, we shall go to the church. Ah ! I wish we had already come back !

Vanderke — You are very urgent !

Antoine — It is because Fulgence is more agitated than you think : he is very cross this evening.

Vanderke — But since Victorine is to go away with him, what else does he want ? That Fulgence is too exacting also.

Antoine — Exacting or not, there's no more drawing back.

Vanderke — Yet if the marriage were the worst of misfortunes for Victorine ?

Antoine — No, monsieur, I have confidence in her, in myself, in God above all ; and then I have my own experience. When

I married her mother, she didn't care very much for me—my brusque manners frightened her; but I loved her so much that I was able to make her very happy, and she died blessing me, as you know.

Vanderke — Yes, she was the model of wives and mothers. But you were not jealous, were you?

Antoine — Indeed I was, monsieur.

Vanderke — But you didn't let her see it?

Antoine — Yes, indeed I did sometimes. Come, come, I tell you Victorine will love her husband, as her mother loved me, with my merits and my faults. But read your letter, monsieur. Is it urgent, as it seemed to be?

Vanderke [*looking at the letter*] — Yes, it says so on the address; that doesn't make it so.

Antoine — It can be soon read. Business before everything.

Vanderke [*approaching the candles, and after having read the letter*] — My son's writing? Yes! It is disguised in the address. [*Turns over the letter.*] But still it is his handwriting. Antoine! pretty serious news! Look!

Antoine [*reading near the right-hand bracket*] — "Harris & Morrison have failed; I hope to announce it to you in time for you to get in shape." Well, are you no more stirred up than that, monsieur?

Vanderke — I was expecting it.

Antoine — But six hundred — pshaw! seven or eight hundred thousand livres have got to be found within forty-eight hours, perhaps.

Vanderke [*calmly*] — They will be found: it was all foreseen.

Antoine — Ah, monsieur, and you told me nothing about it!

Vanderke — What was the good? You had bother enough with your domestic affairs.

Antoine — My affairs are nothing when yours are in question.

Vanderke — But who brought this letter?

Antoine — I didn't see anybody. I found it on my desk not ten minutes ago.

Vanderke — Surely a courier came here?

Antoine — I'll hunt him up and bring him to you.

Vanderke — In my private room, you know. My family mustn't suspect anything.

Antoine — Make yourself easy on that.

[*VANDERKE goes out by door at left.*]

SCENE IV.

Enter FULGENCE stealthily by the door from the garden, greatly agitated.

Antoine [*to himself, taking up his bedroom candle, which he relights at the candelabrum on the bracket*] — Where can that devil of a man have gone? I'll bet he's in the stable on a pile of hay. He must have run a mad race. — Ah, Fulgence, did you see him?

Fulgence — Did you?

Antoine [*candle in hand, turning toward the exit*] — No. Where is he?

Fulgence — I'm looking for him.

Antoine — He must be in the kitchen or the stable.

Fulgence — M. Alexis Vanderke in the kitchen or the stable?

Antoine — And who is talking to you about M. Alexis Vanderke? Would it be himself?

Fulgence — I don't know anything about it. I'm asking you.

Antoine — There's a sharp fellow! Are we playing at cross purposes? Come, come, I've no time to waste on nonsense! Come and help me hunt for the courier.

[*Goes back up toward the garden door.*]

Fulgence [*ironically*] — Oh, it's a courier?

Antoine [*impatiently*] — Yes, a courier that brought a dispatch, one that monsieur wants to speak to, and that I haven't seen yet. Is that clear?

Fulgence — M. Antoine, you take a nice tone with me!

Antoine — Ha, Lord! it's you that take a nice tone.

Fulgence — I am not your son-in-law yet, monsieur, and I have a right to be uneasy! I'm playing for a big stake here. I'm playing for my honor.

Antoine — Oh, how much patience a man needs! Are you crazy, Fulgence? what has your honor got to do with the arrival of a man that brings a letter here? All right, I'll go myself —

Fulgence — You know very well you suspected something too!

Antoine — Go to the devil, I don't any longer !

Fulgence — Very well, monsieur ! And on my part, I tell you that your impatiences don't impose on me. I tell you that a man who is hiding himself, a man wrapped up in a cloak, a man the dogs know, for they don't bark, a man who slips into the house like a ghost —

Antoine [*shrugging his shoulders ; he is near the exit into the anteroom*] — Perhaps a thief ? Come on, quick !

Fulgence [*ironically*] — Joke, do you ? Take care, M. Antoine, you may find out something you don't want to know !

Antoine [*aside*] — The lunatic makes me afraid ! Could it be possible ? No ! [*Aloud, coming forward.*] See here, Fulgence, will you tell me once for all, the first and the last time, what you suspect, and what makes you so cross-grained and crabbed on the eve of your marriage.

Fulgence — Well, yes, I will tell you, although you know it very well, and your question isn't frank. I'll tell you because I am not used to suffering so ! I was at peace. I was industrious. I was cold. I didn't know what it was to love. There, I believe I wasn't born to love ! To love, you must have confidence, and I haven't. Why should you give me your daughter ? Why should your daughter receive a dowry to marry a man who has nothing ? Why were you so urgent to celebrate the marriage ? Why should M. Alexis Vanderke leave the house the moment I suspected him ? and if he is back in it this evening in secret, what is he here to do ?

Antoine [*who has listened with an anxious and troubled face, and now replaces his candlestick on the table with such angry violence that he puts out the candle*] — Ah, how lucky it is for you that I've been jealous, absurd too, in my time ! But for that, these suspicions of yours are things I wouldn't take with so much patience ! But it's a disease ! [*Coming forward to FULGENCE and growing heated little by little, despite the effort he makes at the beginning of the explanation to keep his temper.*] Fulgence ! I give you my daughter because I want her to marry an honest man. I am urgent for consummation because I know you will esteem Victorine as she deserves when you know her better. M. Vanderke gives her a dowry because he loves me. Does that dowry afflict you ? So much the better ! we'll put it back in his coffers without saying a word ! [*Aside.*] Which perhaps will be none too much just at this moment. [*Aloud.*] The junior M. Vanderke went away because — yes,

I'll tell you the whole truth — because his father saw your jealousy and removed him out of kindness to you — to me. If he is back here this evening (which I don't believe), it is because he wanted to bring his father in person an interesting piece of news you'll know very soon. And if he is hiding from me — but you've dreamed that, and as it's impossible, I don't have to seek for the cause !

[Starts to relight his candle at the chandelier on the table, shrugging his shoulders.]

Fulgence [with great bitterness] — The explanation closes my mouth. It orders me to be good-naturedly ignorant of what is going on here. It authorizes you to go on the quest of discovery all alone. Go ahead, then ; as for me, I'll go on my own hook, I'd very humbly have you know.

Antoine — All right ! but I tell you very plainly you've got a wooden head. *[Goes out by the garden.]*

SCENE V.

Fulgence [alone] — Yes, yes ! if he isn't a dupe, that M. Antoine, he's cunning. We shall see, though ! — Ah, Victorine ! There are moments when I hate her even more than I love her, and when I'd like to be her master already to have the right to make her suffer ! Frightful passion, frightful punishment, jealousy is ! I feel that I'm growing wicked, and shall make two victims of her and myself ! I should do better to break off ; but they'll say I'm outraging her — dishonoring her. I must go and explore the garden : it's there the phantom must have taken refuge.

[Starts to go out into the garden, but stops on seeing SOPHIE leaving her chamber on the left.]

SCENE VI.

Sophie [in surprise] — Why, what are you doing here, M. Fulgence ?

Fulgence — Nothing, madame : I came to look for M. Antoine, and I'm going back.

[Makes a movement to go out by the garden.]

Sophie [showing him anteroom door] — This way, please.

[FULGENCE goes out.]

SCENE VII.

[*Sophie alone*] — What a look of menace and hate! I can't bear that fellow! What was he looking toward the garden for? [*Raises the curtain.*] He is always spying, he is spying everywhere! [*Opens the glass door, and quickly closes it.*] A man with a cloak! I'm afraid! Pshaw! it's my father — perhaps my husband, who has come to surprise me. [*Turns to open it again.*] Oh, good gracious! is it you, brother?
 [*Kisses her brother, as he enters wrapped in a cloak.*]

SCENE VIII.

Alexis — Yes, it is I, my dear sister: I may be discovered in the garden, for it seems to me they are looking for me there, and I've come to take shelter with you. I don't want to be seen.

Sophie — You don't want to be seen?

Alexis — No, Sophie; shut the doors, please.

[*He shuts the garden door, and SOPHIE that of the ante-room.*]

Sophie — But tell me quick —

Alexis [*going toward the door at left*] — And here nobody can hear us? Your husband?

Sophie — He won't be here till to-morrow; if you're afraid of being surprised — why, here, you can shut yourself up in his room. [*Indicates door at right.*] But why all this mystery? What's the matter?

Alexis — Nothing — business news I learned at Beauvais, and my father had directed me to get information — I wanted — I had no right to trust anybody but myself with the task of bringing it. Do you know whether he got this evening a letter that was laid on Antoine's desk?

Sophie — Yes, I saw Antoine bring it to him. But why write to him? why not see him?

Alexis — I wanted to wait till everybody in the house was abed; I don't want to see any one but him. I couldn't get to my room. Fulgence was at my heels.

Sophie — Oh! it may be wrong of you to hide so.

Alexis — Perhaps it was still more wrong of me to come back! — But I haven't come back, Sophie. I'll just come in, kiss you, and go away.
 [*Lays down his cloak and hat.*]

Sophie — Thank you for that mark of affection. But have you something special to say to me?

Alexis [*troubled*] — Oh, nothing in particular! By the way, is the marriage celebrated?

Sophie — Victorine's marriage?

Alexis — Yes, Victorine's marriage.

Sophie — And suppose it was?

Alexis — Well, that would change nothing in my resolution to go away this very instant. My carriage is waiting outside the town, and I want to be on the road back to Paris before dawn. Then the marriage is celebrated! It ought to be!

Sophie — And suppose it wasn't?

Alexis — It isn't? Tell me, Sophie, it isn't?

Sophie — It will be to-morrow morning.

Alexis — Absolutely?

Sophie — There is no question of breaking it off.

Alexis [*shaking his gloves with an indifferent air, and avoiding his sister's gaze*] — And Victorine? is she sad? is she cheerful? will she be happy?

Sophie — Ah, who can answer for the future?

Alexis — That is true. And myself — what do I know of mine. I hardly thought of it when I wanted to go away — to see the world! and then, at the last moment, I regretted I had not some more reasonable project.

Sophie — Then why didn't you tell this regret to my father?

Alexis — It was too late.

Sophie — Why so?

Alexis — Ah, Sophie, it is perfectly useless at present for me to confess!

Sophie [*turning toward ALEXIS, who is walking to and fro agitatedly, a little behind her*] — See here! Can it be marriage you have in mind? Are you in love? Whatever your resolutions may be, my father will approve them the day you tell him, "I love tenderly, seriously, and for my whole life."

Alexis — Do I quite know whether I love enough to dare use such a speech? My own heart has become an enigma to me. I hesitate, I shake off my thoughts, I suffer. But so far from encouraging me, it seems as if people busied themselves taking away all hope from me. Then I force myself to forget, I distract myself, and after all, perhaps that is the only sensible thing I have to do henceforth, since I am not loved!

Sophie — Ah, you are uncertain, you feel that you can easily recover, you don't wish to give all your heart without being assured of a return? When we love for good and all, we don't ask whether we shall be happy. We love because we love, that's all! And you don't love, brother! [*Rises.*] Come, don't think any more about it, and don't compromise others' future, since you leave to chance the one you might create for yourself. Go away as soon as every one is abed. I won't tell anybody I have seen you.

Alexis — My father will perhaps disapprove of my having come —

Sophie — Perhaps. And so do I. But some one is coming: hide!

Alexis [*going to the door at right*] — We shall see each other a moment again, we shall have another talk?

Sophie — Yes, yes! shut yourself in!

[*Pushes the door to on ALEXIS, and goes to open that of the anteroom.*]

SCENE IX.

Enter M. and MME. VANDERKE, ANTOINE, and VICTORINE SOPHIE, VICTORINE, and MME. VANDERKE form a group and exchange kisses; VANDERKE comes to front of stage with ANTOINE.

Vanderke — You say you didn't find that man?

Antoine — He must have blown away in smoke. Nobody saw either man or horse, and the letter fell from heaven!

Sophie — It's because there has been some confusion in the house on account of the wedding to-morrow.

Mme. Vanderke — But who is this man that is upsetting you so? and is that letter something —

Vanderke — Nothing, nothing, my dear! Nothing upsets me, thank God! [*Low, to ANTOINE.*] My son must have ordered him to return immediately and speak to no one, so as not to cause alarm in the house. It is his own servant he must have charged with this delicate mission.

Antoine — Probably. It is somebody that knows the way around.

Vanderke [*to SOPHIE*] — My dear, we bring you back Victorine, and wish you good-night, as you have been out of sorts with us this evening.

Sophie — Out of sorts ! Never !

Mme. Vanderke — She is absorbed by the idea that her husband is coming. She doesn't think any more about us. [*To SOPHIE.*] There, we'll forgive you ! To-morrow would be a red-letter day in this family if Alexis were not absent, and Victorine were not to leave us before long !

Victorine — Oh, I choke when I think of it ! Madame, don't make me think of it !

Mme. Vanderke — Why, are you trembling ? You were so light-hearted just now that I almost accused you of not regretting us !

Antoine — Does she know what she's thinking about ? She is so full of whimsys !

Mme. Vanderke [*observing VICTORINE*] — It is true she is a little capricious — for some time — and to-day above all. Can she still have that fever ?

Antoine — No, no, she hasn't had it to-day.

Mme. Vanderke [*to her husband*] — My dear, you are the physician of the house, the only one I have confidence in, and you know ! See if this evening —

Vanderke [*taking VICTORINE'S wrist with a smile*] — See here, Madame Invalid !

Victorine — Oh, I am not an invalid. [*Aside.*] Unluckily for me !

Mme. Vanderke [*to her husband, who has grown serious as he feels VICTORINE'S pulse*] — Well ?

Vanderke — She has been much agitated to-day : she has fever.

Antoine — At that age you always have it !

Mme. Vanderke — But if she were sick to-morrow the ceremony would have to be put off again. One doesn't suffer without the mind feeling it, and it isn't necessary to have gloomy fancies the one day that may decide the rest of your life.

Antoine [*aside*] — Oh, here's Madame meddling in it, too. [*To VANDERKE.*] Monsieur, send Victorine to bed, then. It's getting late.

Vanderke — Yes, yes : she must get to bed at once and sleep sound.

Antoine [*to his daughter*] — You hear ? Monsieur wants you to go to sleep.

Victorine — Can you go to sleep like that, at will ?

Antoine — Always fighting me — over the least things! just out of contrariness!

Victorine — I'll go to sleep, papa! I'll go to sleep!

Mme. Vanderke — Come, kiss your father — who is always scolding you — because he adores you. [*Lowering her voice.*] And don't forget what I advised you to tell him.

Victorine — Oh, no, madame! Papa, I have something to tell you, all alone.

Antoine — Me? Alone?

Mme. Vanderke — Yes, Antoine: we will leave you. Good night, Victorine! [*Kisses her.*] Good night, my dear daughter!

[*Kisses her daughter.* VANDERKE does likewise, and goes out with MME. VANDERKE by the anteroom door. SOPHIE reënters her chamber at left.

SCENE X.

Antoine — Well, what is it?

Victorine [*kneeling*] — Father, M. and Mme. Vanderke have given me their blessing this evening. Won't you give me yours?

Antoine — Are you trying to take the backbone out of me? Get up! get up! All this ceremony does harm!

Victorine — Won't you even kiss me?

Antoine — I haven't refused to kiss you.

Victorine [*clinging to him*] — Father! dear father!

Antoine — Oh dear! are you going to cry again? This is unbearable!

Victorine — Oh, I'm not going to cry. It's eight long days that I haven't cried. It's very hard to correct yourself if you don't pay attention. See if my eyes are not dry.

Antoine [*troubled*] — They are very brilliant! You are not seriously sick?

Victorine — Oh, certainly not!

Antoine — You haven't got a headache?

Victorine — A little — it won't amount to anything.

Antoine — No, no, it won't amount to anything. [*Walks away a space, then comes back.*] Is it — is it true you've got fever?

Victorine — I don't think so. See! my hands are very cool.

Antoine — No indeed! they are very hot. Are you in pain?

Victorine — I don't feel any.

Antoine — If you should be taken sick in the night, you must call.

Victorine — Oh, I wouldn't wake up Sophie.

Antoine — You can ring without waking her — here, take this little bell that can be heard in my office. I shall pass a good part of the night there with Monsieur.

Victorine — Don't worry, papa, I shan't be sick.

Antoine — And not to-morrow either?

Victorine — And not to-morrow either.

Antoine — You'll be fresh, pretty, not melancholy? that would make me feel bad; not too frisky, though, that wouldn't be modest. The — a little becoming air — of piety at the church, politeness with everybody — your natural style, I mean.

Victorine — You will be satisfied with me. Oh, a day like that I wouldn't distress you.

Antoine — Good, my dear — thank you.

Victorine — And now won't you give me your blessing? That is all the pay I ask for my submission.

Antoine [*pressing her to his heart*] — I am satisfied with you. [*Melts in spite of himself.*] I do bless you! I love you! yes, with all my soul! [*Kisses her repeatedly with effusion. Aside, lifting his eyes to heaven and holding his daughter in his arms.*] Ah, M. Vanderke, you don't know what I suffer! [*To VICTORINE, gently pushing her away.*] Come, come, Monsieur is waiting; and as for you, you must rest — say your prayers, think of your poor mother, who was an honest woman, and then don't think about anything more, mind!

Victorine — Yes, papa.

Antoine [*aside, going, and then stopping to look at VICTORINE, who remains motionless*] — I don't know but I'd rather see her cry! Ah, the inside courage isn't there! [*Aloud.*] Victorine!

Victorine [*trembling*] — Papa?

Antoine — Come, listen to me. [*Aside.*] Yes, some will must be put into her. [*Aloud.*] Listen to me hard. Have you courage, true courage?

[*Sits down and takes her in his lap.*]

Victorine — Oh, it seems to me I have a great deal.

Antoine — That's what people must have, you see, to do their duty. Have you pride — respect for yourself — what's called a stout heart?

Victorine — I hope so.

Antoine — Well, you've got to marry Fulgence!

Victorine — Am I not doing what you wish?

Antoine — Oh, it isn't that I wish it: it is that conscience and honor command you to.

Victorine — How so?

Antoine — Because — because — There, don't tremble, it comes hard for me to tell you, but I must. Fulgence imagines you love some one that you ought not to love.

Victorine [*sharply*] — It isn't so!

Antoine — I know it very well, heavens! but he imagines it, and others might imagine it too. Then here's what they'd say about you: "See that little Victorine, Antoine's daughter, who after all is only an upper servant at M. Vanderke's: she is imprudent to look higher than herself and think she might marry —"

Victorine — Why, who?

Antoine — Who? The son of the family, nothing more! a rich and noble young man, who sees nothing more in her than a childhood companion. Well, because they are good to her, because they treat her with kindness, she has the folly to think herself cut out for a grand marriage, and scorns her equals.

Victorine — Oh, papa! what are you saying? Does M. Fulgence think that? Would they say that about me?

Antoine — If you are not married resolutely and with a good grace, they will say that, and they will believe it. And if M. and Mme. Vanderke themselves came to think that, if they accused you of ambition, of coquetry — of baseness — for ambition is baseness sometimes —

Victorine — Enough, enough, father!

Antoine — And if M. Alexis — he wouldn't believe it — but suppose he should believe it, how vain and ridiculous he would think you! how he would laugh at you inside!

Victorine [*hiding her face in her father's bosom*] — Oh God, enough!

Antoine — You see very well how —

Victorine [*rising*] — I see one must have the courage of her own dignity — I will have it, father!

Antoine [*rising and kissing her*] — I have given you pain in telling you this, but it had to be —

Victorine — You have done right, father !

SCENE XI.

Sophie [*coming out of her chamber*] — Well, Antoine, this is how you make her go to bed early !

Antoine [*behind VICTORINE, who has remained downcast, and sits at the right with an absorbed air*] — Madame, Victorine is calm and perfectly reasonable now. Don't pity her too much — don't spoil her, please — don't destroy my work.

Sophie — Antoine, if it were your work to kill her, I believe you would go on with it to the end !

Antoine [*going out by the anteroom*] — My God ! my God !

SCENE XII.

Sophie [*coming forward toward VICTORINE, who has remained as if petrified, on the fauteuil at right*] — Why, what ails her ? What is she thinking about ?

[*ALEXIS leaves the room at right, and comes with SOPHIE behind VICTORINE'S fauteuil.*]

Sophie [*low*] — What are you doing, brother ? Oh, don't show yourself, don't speak to her, since you can't save her !

Alexis — You speak to her, sister : she frightens me !

Sophie [*to VICTORINE*] — Victorine ! Victorine ! Are you deaf ? are you dead ? Answer me !

Victorine [*awaking from a sort of dream*] — Ah ! what is the matter ?

Sophie — Do you forget that I'm waiting for you ? Don't you want to get to sleep ?

Victorine — Oh, that is true ; I hadn't thought of that.

Sophie — What are you doing there, what were you thinking of ?

Victorine — Nothing ! I was sitting here and looking at the floor.

Sophie — Then a floor is a very beautiful thing ?

Victorine — I wasn't seeing it.

Sophie — Was it Fulgence you were thinking of ?

Victorine — Fulgence ? Yes — no — I don't know.

Sophie — It's because you love him so much !

Victorine — I love him so much ! Good heavens ! I don't hate Fulgence. I dread him a little, that's all.

Sophie — You are afraid of him ! Confess you are afraid of him !

Victorine — Afraid — why ? [*Clings to SOPHIE, trembling.*]

Alexis [*showing himself*] — You are afraid, Victorine ! Oh, then you don't love him — there now !

Victorine [*rising*] — Oh, M. Alexis, is this you come back ? [*Coldly, with an effort.*] You will assist at my marriage ? [*More coldly.*] I am very grateful to you.

Alexis — Your marriage ! — your marriage won't come off. I shall oppose it myself ! Will you contradict me ?

Victorine — You will oppose it ? And why ?

Alexis — Because a woman ought to love her husband, and you don't love the one they are giving you.

Victorine — What do you know about it, M. Alexis ? Where do you gather that I don't love Fulgence ? Who told you so ?

Sophie — Why pretend so, Victorine ? Why tell lies when your lot can be decided by a moment's sincerity ?

Victorine — Lies ! why do you tell me I lie ? What do you take me for ? What do you two think of me ?

Alexis — Victorine, you seem to be wandering. What ails you, my dear girl ? Come, open your heart. Are we not your best friends, am I no longer your brother, isn't my sister yours ? Do you think we don't love you with our whole souls ; that we are not determined to save you, if you will only say the word to us ?

Victorine — Let me alone. I've got a headache, I've got a fever, and you're tormenting me ; you're doing me harm for the pleasure of doing it. Oh, nothing will do for you but to laugh at me ; I love Fulgence, yes, I love him, and in spite of you — in spite of everybody, I'm going to love him !

[*Escapes from SOPHIE'S arms, and goes toward the door on the left.*]

Sophie — But listen, Victorine, listen once more.

Victorine — No, no : I've said all there was to say.

[*Goes out swiftly.*]

Alexis — Don't leave her, sister, she makes me uneasy !

Sophie — As for me, I no longer know her ; I no longer understand her. Forget what I said to you, brother, and go away !

Alexis — Abandon her so? Indeed not!

Sophie — Oh, heavens! some one is coming, they're knocking!

[Retires hurriedly into her room on the left.]

SCENE XIII.

Alexis [going to open the door at rear] — No! I won't forget anything, and I won't hide. [Opens the door.] *M. Fulgence*!

Fulgence — M. Vanderke! I was quite sure of it!

[Goes to the bell and rings it violently. The sound of the bell can be heard at a great distance.]

Alexis — What are you doing?

Fulgence — You see, monsieur, I know this bell sounds in M. Antoine's office, and I'm calling so he may come here, so he may know why I don't want to be his son-in-law.

Alexis — A scandal, monsieur? would you make a scene? You are jealous, I know; but you must know yourself —

Fulgence — I know what I wanted to know — and I beg you to believe that from this moment I am no longer jealous.

Alexis — And you would lose Victorine, and outrage my family by your suspicions? I will not suffer it. By what right are you here yourself?

Fulgence — The right of an engaged husband who is very ridiculous, perhaps, but who doesn't want to be a contemptible husband. I felt you were here, and I spied on you, monsieur — I wanted to assure myself. I have done my duty by myself: if you think it bad, it is because you have very little sense of yours.

Alexis — Monsieur, I will teach you — you shall render me — no, I should have too many advantages over you, and appearances are against me; I accept all the consequences of an involuntary fault. Take thought for doing your duty, also, monsieur, and of not being more guilty in my eyes than I wish to be in yours. Come with me and find my father.

Fulgence — No, monsieur: I know my duty as well as you, but I also know my rights. I call on you to stay here till people can come and certify to your presence. [Passionately.] Do you mean to make me pass for a slanderer? [Rings again.]

Alexis — Certainly not, monsieur: my part is chosen. Here! you don't ring loud enough: your hand trembles. I'll help you.

[Pulls the bell cord and rings sharply.]

SCENE XIV.

Enter M. and MME. VANDERKE and ANTOINE.

Antoine [entering first, running] — Here I am, Victorine! Are you — [Stops, petrified.] Fulgence! M. Alexis!

Vanderke — My son!

Mme. Vanderke [hastening to her son] — Alexis!

Antoine — What's going on?

Fulgence — M. Antoine, what I have to say to you is for a father alone to hear.

Antoine — A father? Then it concerns Victorine! Well, you have nothing to say to me about Victorine that everybody mayn't hear. Speak, speak, no keeping back anything: I don't want it. I have no secrets whatever from M. and Mme. Vanderke.

Vanderke — Alexis, why are you here when you ought to be in Paris?

Fulgence — Monsieur's silence is more eloquent than anything I could say. Come, come, this affair must be settled in the family! You are very good, M. Vanderke, to have given Mlle. Victorine a dower: but as for the man who will take those gifts, look for him somewhere else; for it won't be I!

Vanderke — Fulgence, passion is blinding you — you are growing outrageous toward me! Listen: my son brought me news. I rely on your honor — do you wish me to tell you?

Fulgence — No, monsieur, no! don't rely on me, don't rely on anything, don't rely on anybody: there is nothing but lying and treachery in the world!

Mme. Vanderke — M. Fulgence, do you accuse my son? But he was here with his sister; and did he know — does he know even that Victorine is with her? Tell me, Alexis, did you know it?

Alexis — Mother, I might tell you that it is this gentleman who informed me, but I can't lie. I have seen Victorine and spoken with her.

Vanderke — Of course Sophie was present? you

Antoine — Answer now, M. Alexis!

Alexis — Antoine, I don't wish to answer. I should blush at having to justify myself.

Antoine — You don't wish to answer? — you don't wish, M. Alexis Vanderke? I esteem you, I love you — I have raised

you on my knees, I have carried you in my arms — I would have given my life for you — and when they accuse my daughter of being seduced by you — oh, I know very well it isn't true ; but you ought to answer, you ought to justify her before her betrothed — these scornful airs are not becoming — they are death to us. You don't say anything ? Well, I'll go and look for Victorine —

Mme. Vanderke — No, no, no scenes before her : she is sick.

Antoine — Sick or not, dead or alive, she shall tell the truth !

[*Goes toward SOPHIE'S room ; SOPHIE comes out of it and stops him.*]

SCENE XV.

Mme. Vanderke [*to FULGENCE*] — There, you see — I was quite sure of it !

Fulgence — Oh, I don't suspect Madame of not acting in good faith ! I don't incriminate that interview. Madame chaperoned a scene of very touching farewells, doubtless, but I don't believe in eternal farewells myself. Besides, even if my wife were unfaithful only in heart, that is more than I could bear. [*Here ALEXIS listens to FULGENCE with attention and interest, without thinking of braving him further.*] So no one here can take it ill that I renounce the making of a woman's happiness and my own. M. Antoine, have no regrets, I feel that I should have killed her ! Good-bye ! [*Starts to leave.*]

Vanderke — Yes, Fulgence, we must part. [*Approaching him.*] But you will accept the position I design you at Marseilles : I need an honorable man like you to watch over my interests.

Fulgence — No, monsieur, I wish nothing — neither services nor protection, and above all no pity ! I would rather stand on my own feet in bachelorhood as in marriage : that is my sole ambition. Good-bye, monsieur. [*Goes out by the anteroom.*]

SCENE XVI.

Vanderke [*looking after FULGENCE as he goes out*] — Proud, upright, and distrustful ! He is right, he has no need of any one ! [*Coming forward to his son.*] But you, monsieur, have acted badly. You ought not to see Victorine, nor even your sister. That is the first grief you cause me by your wrongdoing, but it is profound.

Antoine — After what has just passed, I cannot remain here longer — I should be dishonored. My daughter will die in a convent ; myself where I can ! — far from you, M. Vanderke, but blessing you — and trying to forgive this young man — who has the happiness of being your son — without that !

M. and MME. VANDERKE make a gesture as of taking each an arm of ANTOINE, to detain him. MME. VANDERKE has her eyes fixed on her son with a look of tenderness and confidence.

Alexis [grasping ANTOINE'S arm vigorously] — Antoine, I don't wish you to pardon me — I wish much more : I wish you to accept me as your son, and grant me your daughter.

Antoine [joyfully] — You ? you ? [Wonderingly.] Is it possible ? [Incredulously.] Are you crazy ? [Proudly.] I don't want it. Is that a marriage for you ? [Authoritatively.] I won't consent to it !

SCENE XVII.

Victorine [pale, and supporting herself with difficulty] — No more will I, father. I don't love and I never have loved M. Alexis Vanderke.

Alexis — You are lying, Victorine !

Antoine [catching VICTORINE in his arms as she sinks] — She is not lying !

Alexis — You are lying yourself ! Ah, my dear Antoine ! I was there. [Points to the door at right.] I heard you tell her that I should scorn her, that I should laugh at her, if I guessed her love. — Your father was lying, Victorine ; and as for me, I swear to you, I swear to Antoine, I swear to my father and my mother [kneeling before M. and MME. VANDERKE] that I love Victorine tenderly, seriously, and for my whole life !

Vanderke [to his son] — Good, my boy : you have always understood that to obey honor, you had no need of my permission.

Alexis — O father, O my best friend !

Sophie — Oh, thank you, father ! thank you, Alexis !

Antoine [to VANDERKE] — But, monsieur, this marriage — Your son — It is impossible —

Vanderke — Antoine, it is my will, it is my son's duty, and it is my duty and yours.

Antoine — How is that ?

Mme. Vanderke — Because they love each other.

Vanderke — And because we ought to have foreseen it if we meant to put a stop to it.

A WEDDING CALL.

By ALEXANDRE DUMAS, JR.

(Translated for this work by Forrest Morgan.)

[ALEXANDRE DUMAS, JR., was the illegitimate son of the great novelist, born in Paris, July 27, 1824, and not acknowledged by his father till six years old: his boyhood experiences filled him with passionate resentment against the social ostracism of illegitimates, and he devoted much mature energy to their cause. He went through the lower grades of schools, but had no superior education. At seventeen he published a small volume of poems, "The Sins of Youth." At about nineteen he returned to his father, but only stayed a few months, as the disorderly spendthrift household he afterwards drew from in "A Prodigal Father" disturbed him; so did his private debts, but his father told him lightly, "Work and pay them off, as I do." He took the advice, but not at first very energetically, beginning with a one-act play in verse, "The Queen's Jewel" (1845), of no account, and unimportant pieces in the *Ladies' Journal*, but mainly trying to have a good time. But at twenty-two he set seriously to work, writing novels; the only one of this period which has survived is "La Dame aux Camélias" (1848), kept alive by the famous play ("Camille") made from it a year or two later. Yet this marvelous play, vividly alive, and holding the stage half a century after, was hawked about the theaters for two or three years without acceptance, it being so opposed to the ruling ideals as to seem a foregone failure. Produced in 1852, it took the French world by storm; prohibited in England till after hundreds of performances in France, it was at once equally successful there. A year later he gave forth "Diana of the Lily," which did not take. Two years after (1855) he brought out "The Demi-Monde," one of his foremost productions; in 1857 "The Money Question," in 1858 "The Natural Son," in 1859 "A Prodigal Father" (adapted in English as "My Awful Dad"), and then nothing for four years. In 1864 he came forward again with "The Friend of Women," which was a complete failure. In disappointment he turned to novel-writing once more, and published in 1860 "The Clemenceau Case," which had only moderate success, but is still read and highly esteemed. About this time he was accidentally launched on a new stage career of different class. Asked by the famous journalist Émile Girardin to put a play he had written in shape for the stage, he had to remodel it so entirely that Girardin refused to set his name to it; neither would Dumas, but when produced as "A Woman's Torture," it had enormous success. It was a three-act play of moderate length, and Dumas saw that brevity and rapidity were now essential characteristics of a play, and wrote no more long ones. "Mme. Aubray's Ideas" was brought out in 1867, "Denise" the same year, the tremendous "Wedding Call" -- in some respects his masterpiece of brilliant wit and effectiveness -- and "The Princess Georges" in 1868, and for some years no more. "Claude's Wife" (Claude = Claudius: i.e., "A Modern Messalina") came in 1873: it was Dumas' own favorite of all his plays; he insisted on having it revived long after, but it failed both times. The same year came "M. Alphonse," a striking success. "The Danicheffs" and "The Foreign Woman" came in 1876, "Joseph Balsamo" in 1878, "The Princess of Bagdad" and "Francillon" (his last, and very successful) in 1887. He had finished a great play, "The Road to Thebes," but for some reason held it back from production, and finally refused to let it be acted after his death. He died November 28, 1895.]

PLAY IN ONE ACT.

Scene. — A drawing-room in a country house.

SCENE I.

*Present : LYDIA, COUNTESS DE MORANCÉ, a youngerly widow ;
and her friend LEBONNARD.*

Lebonnard — It has just struck two.

Lydia [*showing agitation*] — Our friends are late.

Lebonnard — No, it's your clock that's too fast.

Lydia [*sighing*] — Ah-h !

Lebonnard — Do you feel upset ?

Lydia — It's very natural, I should say.

Lebonnard — Try and not let it be seen.

Lydia [*drawing a breath to the utmost depth*] — O-h !

Lebonnard — Did you make out ?

Lydia — Yes.

Lebonnard — You are all ready ?

Lydia — Yes.

Lebonnard — It's all understood ? You haven't forgotten anything ? You don't regret anything ?

Lydia — Nothing, so long as I don't have to think of that man any more !

Lebonnard — Don't worry, you won't think of him any more.

Valet [*announces*] — M. and Mme. de Cygneroi !

Lydia [*aside*] — They've come very early.

SCENE II.

*Enter DE CYGNEROI, his wife FERNANDE, and a nurse-maid
carrying a three-months-old baby.*

Lydia [*to FERNANDE, in the most affectionate tone, but inspecting her from head to foot*] — At length !

De Cygneroi [*extending his hand to LYDIA*] — My dear Countess, allow me to present Mme. de Cygneroi. I should have been happy to make this presentation the very day of our marriage, for you are to be, I trust, one of our best friends ; but you were absent.

Lydia — I was forced to rejoin my husband, who was very sick, and died a few days after.

De Cygneroi [*in surprise*] — You are a widow?

Lydia — For more than a year.

De Cygneroi — Why didn't you let me know?

Lydia — I didn't know where you were. [*Taking FERNANDE'S hand.*] We shall soon regain the lost time, madame. M. de Cygneroi and I are old friends, and I believe I was the first confidante of his love for you.

De Cygneroi — I owed you that, Countess.

Fernande — My husband has often spoken of you, madame; we are only home ten days, and my first call —

Lydia — You have been traveling the whole year?

Fernande — For the first six months; then we settled down in Brittany at my father's. I wanted to be near him for my confinement. Shall I introduce my son, three months old? I had to bring him with me, as I could not have paid you the call otherwise, for I nu —

De Cygneroi [*interrupting*] — Fernande!

Fernande — Why, yes, I nurse him, and I am proud of it. The Countess has had children, I presume?

Lydia — No, madame.

Fernande — I am sorry for you. It is such an amusement!

Lydia [*low, to LEBONNARD*] — She is a fool!

Lebonnard [*same*] — Oh no, oh no.

Lydia [*looking at the baby which the nurse holds out to her, while Fernande very gently lifts the veil that covers the little face*] — He is splendid. He is very large for his age.

Fernande — I should think so! He weighed ten pounds when he was born. Didn't he, Gaston? It was you that weighed him. — If you knew how I suffered! I thought I was going to die. We don't know about that when we get married. Poor little darling! But what a delight it was, too, the first cry he set up! And he didn't lose any time about it: he cried right away! But it's the very only time he did cry: he always laughs. — Give a sweet little laugh for the lady. There, see that! — I got confessed the night before: you can't tell what may happen. My cousin was confined a little ahead of me, the 23d of June, and I the 2d of July; so her boy is older than Gaston (my boy has the same name as his father): well, there isn't any comparison, either as to size or intelligence. He understands everything already. It isn't because he is my boy, but he is really extraordinary.

Lydia — Like all children!

Fernande — Yes, and I'm puffed up like all mothers.

Maid — [*who is carrying the baby to FERNANDE*] — Madame — ?

Fernande [*looking at her watch*] — It's his hour ?

Maid — Yes, madame.

Fernande — His Lordship is hungry. But when he doesn't get fed right off he gets mad. You will permit me, dear madame ?

[*Takes the baby in her arms and makes ready to go out.*

Lydia — I will go with you — to the dining-room. [*Low, to LEBONNARD.*] She certainly is a fool.

Lebonnard — Oh no, oh no.

SCENE III.

Lebonnard — Well, is it going along on casters ?

De Cygneroi — Yes.

Lebonnard — Are you put out ?

De Cygneroi — Lord, no ! but I'm a little uneasy. I couldn't do otherwise than present my wife to Mme. de Morancé, whom I used to — visit — before I was married ; social usage forces me to : but I'd have been just as well satisfied not to bring my wife here.

Lebonnard — Why ?

De Cygneroi — You want to know ?

Lebonnard — Yes, go ahead.

De Cygneroi — Mme. de Morancé and my wife ought not to strike up a close intimacy.

Lebonnard — Why not ? Mme. de Morancé is a woman in society, and the best society. Nobody has a word to say against her, she has never been compromised, she has never had a lover !

De Cygneroi — Huh ! what about me ?

Lebonnard — You ! were you Mme. de Morancé's lover ? You say so ; but if it were true, you ought to be the last one to say so ! Fortunately it isn't true.

De Cygneroi — What, not true ?

Lebonnard — Prove it to me.

De Cygneroi — You're going crazy ! you were our sole confidant. [*LEBONNARD begins to laugh.*] What do you find to laugh about ?

Lebonnard — You amuse me greatly.

De Cygneroi — Why that sort of fleering tone ?

Lebonnard — What is being a woman's lover ?

De Cygneroi — What is it ?

Lebonnard — Yes.

De Cygneroi — If you don't know at your age, you never will know.

Lebonnard — All the more reason for explaining it to me.

De Cygneroi — It either is or isn't, and it doesn't need explaining.

Lebonnard — Then it's a fact.

De Cygneroi — Naturally.

Lebonnard — What is the characteristic of a fact ?

De Cygneroi — Do you know you are insupportable with your hair-splitting ?

Lebonnard — The characteristic of a fact is the ability to prove it, either by witnesses who have seen it, or by traces of it you come upon, or even by notoriety or tradition. Augustus ascended into heaven after his death, — Numerius Atticus saw and publicly announced it ; Charles IX. fired on the people ; '93 inaugurated liberty in France, — those are incontestable facts. Where is the witness, the notoriety, the tradition, to prove that you were Mme. de Morancé's lover ? Are you ready to make solemn public oath to it like Numerius Atticus, to put the occurrence on the stage like Marie Joseph Chénier, to print it in the *People's Friend* like Marat ? Is it in history, in legend, on men's lips ? You want it to have been for the first time with you, who say it was so at all : is it to be so still ? Do you call Mme. de Morancé *thou* before folks ? Do you kiss her before her servants ? Do you call her "My darling big kitten" ? Have you a solitary letter from her ? And hasn't she the right to order you out of the house if you make any allusion to a fact that can't exist except in your own imagination ? In a word, if to save your life or your honor you had to prove the fact, could you prove it ? No ! Then it isn't so. There's nothing true but what you can prove, and you can't prove anything but what's true. You are dreaming, my dear fellow.

De Cygneroi — And the moral of this discourse ?

Lebonnard — Is, that Mme. de Morancé, for you as for me, is a woman in society, the same society as your mother, your sister, and your wife ; a woman you sometimes dined with when you were a youth, and whom it's your duty to present your wife to when you get married, because she is worthy of your respect.

De Cygneroi — Of my respect, yes : of my esteem, no. Esteem and respect are not the same thing. You respect situations : you don't esteem anything but characters. You are a bachelor, which must be a good life ; but get married to-morrow to a girl perfectly pure, perfectly innocent, perfectly modest, and you'll see at once how you rate all those women of the world, of all the world, and for all the world, that you've had love affairs with to occupy and employ your youth. You'll see what pity, not to say what scorn, you bury them with for all time, and how you dig a common ditch and shovel into it, in a hurry and higgledy-piggledy, the marquises and the housewives, the great ladies and the street-walkers ! and how they may sort themselves out in there as they can — they are the same price ! You were wrong to pursue them, they were wrong to yield, but you wouldn't have pursued them if it hadn't been evident they'd yield. That love ? Rot ! Pleasure at the outside, and yet such pleasure !

Lebonnard — In other words, you're like all men,—you have two moralities according to circumstances ; you reasoned formerly like a bachelor, you reason now like a husband. That is called selfishness beforehand, ingratitude afterwards. Love-lace is dead, 'rah for Hubby !

De Cygneroi — That'll do to talk !

Lebonnard — Then if M^{me}. de Morancé had become a widow during your earlier condition, you wouldn't have married her ?

De Cygneroi — She didn't become one, which disposes of that.

Lebonnard — You wouldn't have married her ?

De Cygneroi — No.

Lebonnard — And what reasons could you have given for that dastardly performance ?

De Cygneroi — Lebonnard !

Lebonnard — There's nothing offensive in the phrase, seeing it's only a hypothesis. Then your love would have come to an end at the exact moment you could have avowed and proved it, and you would have abandoned that unfortunate woman to her regrets and her remorse, with neither regrets nor remorse of your own.

De Cygneroi — But I did abandon her all the same to her regrets and her remorse, and you see what sort of mourning she wears for her love, her virtue, and her husband to boot. And there's no love and there's no remorse in any of these affairs,

and none of that stuff is true. Certainly nobody has cultivated more than I have that contraband love which moralists have branded with the gross name of adultery; and as I'm not a fool, whatever you may say about it, I have gone to the trouble of submitting that particular love to a physiologico-philosophico-chemical analysis, and here's the result: Adultery is one of those mixtures where the elements sometimes associate, but never combine. The element contributed by the woman is composed of a topsy-turvy ideal, a weak dignity, an elastic morality, an imagination muddled by bad talk, bad reading, and bad examples, curiosity of sensation disguised under the name of sentiment, appetite for danger, delight in stratagem, need of the sin, vertigo from below, and all the duplicities the circumstances necessitate. The man brings his tailor, his horse, the way he ties his cravat, oglings like a provincial tenor, mechanical hand-squeezing, phrases that have been kicked about everywhere till the very lozenges and valentines will have no more of them, protestations you couldn't take in a Tammany voter with, his idleness, desire to economize, — Clorinda and Pamela not lending except on pawn; lastly, what he calls his honor, — that is to say, in case of an explosion, the chance of getting a slap in the face, and either putting up with it or killing a man he has robbed, or sadder still, living on with the dishonored wife in a cottage where there is no heart any longer. Once the retort is over the fire, forward come the carriage with the blinds down, the chamber in the shady hotel, the prudential bolts, and all the traditional hypocrisies; the friends you have to fight shy of in the streets, the servants you have to bribe, the bondages of every description, the humiliations of every species, the dirty tricks of every sort. Combine, triturate, distill, decompose, precipitate all the elements, and if you find there an atom of esteem, a speck of love, a vapor of dignity, I'll eat my head. — False! false! false! Where shall we get love for our wives, our mothers, and our daughters from, if we place it there? Pure prostitution, I tell you! And see here — when just now I saw my wife, my wife! prattling so innocently about her baby and her love to Mme. de Morancé, I wanted to push her to the door with the exclamation, "Make your escape! I was that wretched creature's lover!"

Lebonnard — Shake! you're in the truth with both feet.

De Cygneroi — You're joking again.

Lebonnard — God forbid! I think exactly as you do.

De Cygneroi — Then your sermons just now — ?

Lebonnard — Merely for proof. I wanted to know if you were still in love with Mme. de Morancé. I was afraid of it when I saw you come back here.

De Cygneroi — Huh ! how little you know me ! Why, in the three years that — mixture lasted, I wasn't in love six weeks. I was in hot water from the start. And the tears ! and the reproaches ! and the jealousies ! and the spyings ! and the terrors ! — Do you know how often Mme. de Morancé and I found ourselves alone — what is called alone ? I never said anything to you about that, because you'd have guded me. It's incredible, and you'll laugh to kill. In three years, twice, once at Lyons and once at Havre, — for it took a journey to get so, by meeting in a hotel where we didn't appear to know each other before the other travelers, and seizing the first chance. You can see that from the way it is here. And when I wrote to her I signed "Addè," as if I had been an old convent friend, and she signed "Alfred" ! There are the letters we exchanged. At last, one day, I took my courage in both hands and simply said to her : "I respect you too much not to be frank with you : I don't love you as you deserve to be loved, and I'm going to get married !"

Lebonnard — How simple it was !

De Cygneroi — After hunting for two years, that was the best I found to do.

Lebonnard — What did she say ?

De Cygneroi — Fell in a dead faint.

Lebonnard — Thunder !

De Cygneroi — For a spell I thought she had killed herself. I spent five minutes there that weren't funny. I wanted to call for help, and I was in a cold sweat for fear somebody would come in.

Lebonnard — Well ?

De Cygneroi — She came to all by herself.

Lebonnard — And then ?

De Cygneroi — And then she said to me, "Very well, sir, get married !"

Lebonnard — That didn't lack for simplicity either. And since then ?

De Cygneroi — I wanted to have an explanation with her.

Lebonnard — There now ! I was saying to myself, "That man will make reparation !"

De Cygneroi — My dear fellow, I may not have but one merit, but I do have that, — I am everything that's most sincere ; I have neither pride nor prejudice ; what I feel I avow ; what I experience I tell. — When I presented myself at Mme. de Morancé's, she had left the house.

Lebonnard — You wrote to her ?

De Cygneroi — Certainly ! A fool's letter. But you know a fellow writes he doesn't know why.

Lebonnard — And she answered you ?

De Cygneroi — She answered me : " You were nearer right than I was, thank you ! ALFRED." When I got married, I sent her a letter of announcement, as I did to everybody I knew. To-day we've made her a call ; she has given us a cordial reception : everything's O.K.

Lebonnard — Ah, these women, these women !

De Cygneroi — Which means — ?

Lebonnard — 'Then that's your whole story ?

De Cygneroi — Yes.

Lebonnard — You don't know anything else ?

De Cygneroi — No ! what else ?

Lebonnard [*beckoning to DE CYGNEROI to come close so he can talk low*] — When Mme. de Morancé was — [*looks to see if any one can hear, and lowers his voice*] — the mistress of Don Alfonso —

De Cygneroi — And who might Don Alfonso be ?

Lebonnard — Mme. de Morancé's first lover, a Spaniard with black hair, ruddy cheek-bones, blue cheeks, white teeth, red lips, and finds means, like all Spaniards, of putting an *r* into every word he says — *rrr* !

De Cygneroi — Who got up that yarn for you ?

Lebonnard — It's no yarn, it's a fact.

De Cygneroi — Are there witnesses ? Did you see it ? Numerius Atticus —

Lebonnard — I'm Numerius Atticus.

De Cygneroi [*with conviction*] — It's absurd.

Lebonnard — When I tell you it's — Would I have let you leave that woman so brutally, if I hadn't known what to count on with her ? You are a woman-killer, you are an amorist, you can't be told everything ; I'm of no consequence, I'm a confidant that nobody feels any constraint with. I'm not so happy, but I know more details. And besides, it isn't those inside the house that see how it's burning, it's the ones out-

side. I am outside, and I see just where the fire starts and how it's put out. It was you that put out Alfonso's fire, or the fired-out Alfonso if you like it better. You thought you were a fire-bug, and you were a hydrant !

De Cygneroi — Oh, you tell me that, because it's high comedy ; it's the legit. !

Lebonnard — Well, she broke with Don Alfonso in 1865.

De Cygneroi — '65 ?

Lebonnard — October '65.

De Cygneroi — But I was June '64.

Lebonnard — Which proves that she began with cherries and finished up with prunes.

De Cygneroi — It isn't possible. She lived in retirement, and besides, when all's said, she's no such woman.

Lebonnard — Very good. Do you know this handwriting ?

[Shows him a letter.

De Cygneroi [trying to get hold of it] — Do I know it !

Lebonnard — Wait ! regular formalities. Do you solemnly swear you'll never tell Mme. de Morancé I showed you this letter ?

De Cygneroi — I solemnly swear !

Lebonnard [aside] — Who is it that needs a false oath ?

De Cygneroi [reading] — "My friend —"

Lebonnard — "My friend," that's me.

De Cygneroi — "My friend, in the absence of Gaston —"

Lebonnard — "Gaston," that's you. Look at the date.

De Cygneroi — August '64.

Lebonnard — And you were June.

De Cygneroi — And I was June.

Lebonnard — Then that was two months after you were — ?

De Cygneroi — Just so.

Lebonnard — Do you recall being absent ?

De Cygneroi — Yes, I went to see my mother, who was sick.

Lebonnard — Well, it was precisely during that absence she wrote this note. Read ahead.

De Cygneroi [reading] — "My friend, in Gaston's absence I must absolutely see A——."

Lebonnard — "A——" ? Alfonso.

De Cygneroi — I understand perfectly.

Lebonnard — You understand perfectly.

De Cygneroi — "Give me your hospitality to-day. Send off all the servants, and if there should be any danger in my enter-

ing your house, make the same old signal at your window." So she went to your house?

Lebonnard — Often.

De Cygneroi — And me she made go to Lyons or Havre.

Lebonnard — There are women who love best in certain cities. I knew a "great and honest lady," as Brantôme says, myself, who only loved me at Dombasle, on the Meuse. I don't know what memories that district brought up to her, but she absolutely wouldn't love me anywhere else. I am bound in honesty to admit that once there, she loved me well. Proceed.

De Cygneroi — That's all : proceed yourself.

Lebonnard — Well, she came to my house that day because she wanted to get possession again of some letters that Don Alfonso wouldn't give up, — for she is a woman who always wants her letters given back. In fact, it was that very lesson that decided her to sign "Alfred" when she wrote to you — you or others.

De Cygneroi — What, others?

Lebonnard — Perhaps. But I only know this one history. I think there must have been a new one for some time, though. An infernal big Englishman comes here —

De Cygneroi — And why, at the time these things were going on, didn't you let me know about them?

Lebonnard — It wasn't my secret ; and besides, you weren't in any danger. It was neither a girl nor a widow, that you might have to marry, it was only another man's wife. In her heart I believe she loved you better than she did Don Alfonso : but she was forced to go the road he wanted her to in order to get her letters back, all the more that he knew of her fresh tie-up ; and it wasn't till the 11th of October, '65, that she obtained her last little scrap of paper.

De Cygneroi — '65?

Lebonnard — '65.

De Cygneroi — Then out of my three years —?

Lebonnard — Don Alfonso still owes you fifteen months, about.

De Cygneroi — And it was at your house that —

Lebonnard — That the accounts were settled. The fact is, it was more suitable for everybody. And then, Mme. de Morancé had asked me with so much insistence, as this letter proves.

[*Handing GASTON a letter.*

De Cygneroi [*reads*] — “Yes, I remember everything and regret nothing —”

Lebonnard [*quickly*] — That isn't it! that isn't it!

De Cygneroi — But it's her writing, too!

Lebonnard — Yes, but it's about another matter. Give it here! Give it here!

De Cygneroi [*looking at the envelope*] — Why, the letter is addressed to you!

Lebonnard — Yes.

De Cygneroi — Oh, come, say now! you too? *Tu quoque?*

Lebonnard — No, not exactly.

De Cygneroi — Now I understand why you didn't say anything to me.

Lebonnard — Listen, listen. I, you know, was — One can't even tell — Fact is, it would need a special word for these shades of difference.

De Cygneroi — Then there's four of us already!

Lebonnard — Four?

De Cygneroi — You, I, the Spaniard, *rrr!*

Lebonnard — No, no! this way: the Spaniard, you, I —

De Cygneroi — What odds! — and Lord — the Englishman — he is a lord, I hope?

Lebonnard — Yes: Lord Gamberfield.

De Cygneroi — What, that damnably ugly red-headed Englishman that she said she couldn't look at without laughing?

Lebonnard — Woman is very changeable.

De Cygneroi — That's four of us! Let's make up a whist party. Between ourselves, you know what they call that sort of women?

Lebonnard — Perfectly; but it isn't worth the trouble of saying, especially as here's your wife.

SCENE IV.

Enter FERNANDE, carrying the baby.

De Cygneroi [*running to FERNANDE and taking her face in his hands*] — Oh, my adorable angel, how I love you!

Fernande [*kissing him*] — And so do I! [*Perceiving LEBONNARD.*] Oh, we're not alone!

De Cygneroi — Before Lebonnard we can say anything: he's another self.

Lebonnard — Ever since '65.

De Cygneroi — He may tell you what I was saying to him just now, and what I think of you when I compare you with other women.

Fernande — I am no better than the rest, dear; only it's me you love.

De Cygneroi [*taking the baby in his arms and covering it with kisses*] — Ah, dear little mite!

Fernande — Take care! don't shake him up too much, he's just had breakfast.

De Cygneroi — We must go now.

Fernande — We can't: Mme. de Morancé has asked us to stay to dinner.

De Cygneroi — Did you accept?

Fernande — I said I'd come and ask you if we might.

De Cygneroi — You will say to Mme. de Morancé that we have business in Paris.

Fernande — But we can't start back before the baby's had a nap. In the carriage he won't sleep a wink more. You know he has to have music to go to sleep. That's it! I'll play the "Cradle Song" to him. [*Seats herself at the piano.*]

Lebonnard — That makes a charming picture.

De Cygneroi [*dandling the baby in his arms: to LEBONNARD*] — Allow me to say, my dear boy, that even if you didn't think it your duty to warn me in the old times, you might have warned me two days ago, when I wrote to you we were coming to make this call and asked you to be here.

Lebonnard — What I've just said to you, nobody else knows. You can find some pretext for not coming back, and that'll end it.

De Cygneroi — Make yourself easy on that score.

[*Changes arm under the baby and shakes it up, instead of putting it in the cradle. FERNANDE still playing Chopin's "Cradle Song" on the piano.*]

Lebonnard — You'll have that child waked up. Mind what you're about.

De Cygneroi [*handing the baby to LEBONNARD*] — All right, hold him, if you can do it better than I can.

Lebonnard [*taking the baby and looking at it asleep*] — Poor papa, he's mad with his old friend Lebonnard, because his friend Lebonnard has told him the truth; and men, they don't like

that, just as babies don't like to be spanked. And to think that you too, you'll be a man, and you'll love women, and you'll want they shouldn't ever have loved anybody but you, just as if you were all alone on earth. And when you are quite convinced they adore you, you'll drop them right there to run after other ones. And when you find out they don't love you, all the time you're not loving them any more, you'll be furious and you'll get jealous re-tro-spec-tive-ly, like your little papa just this minute. So you'll be an ass like all of us, darling pet, and you'll bestow life on other men who'll be asses like you, and they'll beget others who'll be asses like them, and so on, till God hasn't any more need of human assitude, which will be a i-o-n-g time. Sleep, my dearie, you'll never do anything better. What consoles me a little is to think that the assiness of my family will come to a halt in my person, as I shall die without direct heirs. *[Kisses the baby.]*

Fernande — Is he asleep?

Lebonnard — Sound.

Fernande [*seeing* LEBONNARD *putting the baby in the cradle and* DE CYGNEROI *writing*] — Poor Lebonnard, you made him carry your son.

De Cygneroi — He wanted to. He worships it. And besides, I had a little writing to do.

Lebonnard — True enough, I worship babies, like everybody that hasn't any.

Fernande — Give him to me. Anyway, it's so hot here I'd rather he'd sleep out under the trees.

Lebonnard — I'll carry him there for you.

Fernande — But where is the maid?

Lebonnard — She must be with the cook.

[*DE CYGNEROI waves a pleasant good-bye. They go out. He reseats himself to write.*]

SCENE V.

Lydia [*entering: to* DE CYGNEROI, *who has begun and torn up several letters*] — Well, my dear M. de Cygneroi, you dine with us, don't you?

De Cygneroi [*rising*] — Ah! is it you, madame? — No, we shall not have the honor of seating ourselves at your table. In fact, that is what I was writing to you about, not being sure of seeing you.

Lydia — What ! you going off like that, without even saying good-bye to me ? while as for me, I should be most happy to begin the soonest I can with Mme. de Cygneroi, whom I find charming, relations which will ripen into friendship, I hope !

De Cygneroi — Unfortunately, this call is the only one we shall have the honor to make on you. We are about to start for Brittany.

Lydia — This very day ?

De Cygneroi — This evening.

Lydia — And you stay there — ?

De Cygneroi — The whole year.

Lydia — And after that your whole life ?

De Cygneroi — It is very possible.

Lydia — In other words, you don't wish me to see your wife again ?

De Cygneroi — Good Heavens, madame, there are situations —

Lydia — In short, you don't wish your wife to become the friend of your — former friend.

De Cygneroi — And above all, of Don Alfonso's former friend.

Lydia [*agitatedly, changing her tone*] — Who told you about Don Alfonso ?

De Cygneroi — What difference does that make ? Do you deny the fact ?

Lydia — There's only one man in the world who could have told you that, and it's Lebonnard.

De Cygneroi — And if Lebonnard did tell me that, he must have told me something else, I suppose ?

Lydia — One can put no confidence in anybody, then ! O Lebonnard, it's shameful !

De Cygneroi — All the more that you had paid for his silence.

Lydia [*sighing*] — Yes, you are right, M. de Cygneroi : Mme. de Cygneroi and I ought not to contract a friendship. Don't hold ill-will towards me — good-bye.

De Cygneroi — I have no sort of right to hold ill-will towards you. You are free in your actions. Only —

Lydia — Only — ?

De Cygneroi — Only you'll admit that it wasn't worth the trouble, having the Spanish remembrances you have, to be taken sick when I announced my marriage to you. And if

I announced my marriage to you so bluntly, it was because something in me told me you were fooling me, though you had sworn a hundred times that I was your first love.

Lydia—It was true.

De Cygneroi—Only Don Alfonso was your first lover! I know these feminine subtleties. But as we're on this, I would like to know, just out of curiosity, how you, young, handsome, rich, respected, well-born, intelligent, and above all, able to wait, came to start in on that Iberian with the fool smile.

Lydia—I was bored, that's how it began; he bored me, that's how it ended. Such in one word is the history of women's first slips.

De Cygneroi—And the other slips?

Lydia—Come very naturally in sequence, like drafts of air through open doors.

De Cygneroi—Is it really you talking? *You?*

Lydia—Oh, my dear, you ask me questions, and I answer them in the language that accords with my actual position. Those who say they stopped after one first slip, above all after one first deception, and that, betrayed and hurled back into solitude by the man they loved, they silently and resolutely retraced their steps in place of continuing to descend—they lie, you take my word for it.

De Cygneroi—That you loved or thought you loved Don Alfonso before you knew me, I can regret for you, but it doesn't concern me; but that during our intimacy you took up Don Alfonso again on the same footing as of old—that isn't easy to name, or, to speak more plainly, it is much too easy.

Lydia—Well, it was still a proof of love I gave you, and I deserved all the more credit because I couldn't boast of it.

De Cygneroi—That was all it lacked.

Lydia—Don Alfonso, jealous like all Spaniards, and what was more, exasperated by my withdrawal, threatened to send you my letters—

De Cygneroi—The scoundrel!

Lydia—Oh yes, the scoundrel!—unless I consented to reclaim them on the old conditions. All I could extort was that the restitution should be made at Lebonnard's house instead of his.

De Cygneroi—And why should you prefer Lebonnard's?

Lydia—Lebonnard was your friend, his house was near yours: that consoled me a little.

De Cygneroi — And how many letters did you write to Don Alfonso?

Lydia — Two!

De Cygneroi — Always by twos.

Lydia — And a little insignificant note he gave me back into the bargain.

De Cygneroi — Into the *bargain*! But instead of consenting to that shameful traffic, it would have been better to tell me everything.

Lydia — I did think strongly of it, but he would have sent my letters to my husband. It was Othello coupled with Iago. There was no wrong side to the cloth, as you can see. Oh, but I have suffered deeply! Well, scarcely delivered from that horrible nightmare, — there's no other word, — and when at last I could call myself entirely yours, certain that you would know nothing, — at the moment I was going to be happy, you left me abruptly. It was the punishment I deserved, I know; but a punishment is none the easier to bear because it is deserved! just the contrary. Do you know that an hour after your departure I poisoned myself? Without Lebonnard I should have died.

De Cygneroi — And then, out of gratitude —

Lydia — Not even that, my friend! When I had come back to health, everything was relaxed inside me, and the moral sense was annihilated. I had a sort of thirst for evil. I had arrived at curiosity of emotions with no to-morrow, caprices without remorse, anonymous meetings. Love had made me suffer so much, he had humiliated me so much, that I wanted to dishonor him, to tear off his wings, to drag him through the mud. Poor Lebonnard! — I ask you for the sake of asking, if it was he that could give me back my lost ideal? Where was my head? Pshaw, no! Lebonnard impassioned would be the most comical thing imaginable. I should never forget it and I should always be laughing at it.

De Cygneroi — Wretched creature! where did you get to?

Lydia — You ask me to tell you everything, and I'm telling you everything. What is it to you that I've been the mistress — oh, the vile word! but it has to be spoken — that I've been the mistress of this man or that, and that the memory of the one makes me want to cry, and the memory of the other makes me want to laugh!

De Cygneroi — It is to me — it is to me that there was a portion of your life which was mine, during which I thought myself loved by you and during which I was deceived ; it is to me, besides, that you have been laughing at me, and that after having been ridiculous to you, I am so to myself — for after all, if I went to Lyons and Havre during that time, it was because I loved you.

Lydia — Is that true?

De Cygneroi — Certainly it's true : why else should I have gone?

Lydia — Oh, how happy you make me ! Reassure yourself — you have not been ridiculous ; I have never loved any one but you. Whatever I may have *done*, I *thought* only of you, and your image was always there. Imagine — one evening not long ago, I wanted to see once more that apartment at Havre where we passed such sweet hours together. I set out ; I arrived all alone at that hotel, at the same hour we two had arrived, and the same date, the thirtieth of June. There were the same places, there were the same people, there was the same night — starry, transparent, balmy. One would have said that Nature had made herself my accomplice. Nothing was changed, except that you were no longer there, that you no longer loved me, and that you were by another woman's side — that is, that death reigned instead of life ! I looked at myself in the hotel mirror. Was it I ? I could not recognize myself ! Any one that saw me would have taken me for insane. I said to myself, " And yet I am not homely ! why doesn't he love me any more ? " I did my hair in the way you liked, that time when you did like something about me. I passed the whole night that way, remembering, crying, waiting. The power of memory ! It kept seeming to me you were just going to open the door. Day broke, and you had not come. There were geraniums on the mantel ; I picked off a blossom and put it in this locket, which has never left me since. [*Kisses the locket.*] It is so sweet to believe in something, even if it's only a flower ! — Ah, don't let's talk any more about all this !

De Cygneroi — And on the other side of the locket, I suppose, is Lord Gamberfield's portrait ?

Lydia — Well, truly, you are astonishing, you men ! You don't understand that when you have deserted us we can't pass our lives in tears. We have to try and forget you, and after all we are flesh and blood like you. Why, in this

world where nothing is eternal, should nothing be eternal but grief?

De Cygneroi [*looking her square in the eyes*] — I understand Don Alfonso, who is handsome, so it seems; I understand Lebonnard, who is amusing: but I don't understand Lord Gamberfield, who is grotesque.

Lydia — You understand the first two already — thank you! I am going to make you understand the other one. He is not so grotesque as you think. He has cut off his whiskers; he wears mustaches; his hair is not so red — it is true there's not so much of it; he has grown a little thinner, and he speaks French better. That front tooth he lost he has had put back; you'd vow it was natural — it's actually the finest one he's got. He is a man of good breeding, of very old family, Member of Parliament, immensely rich, which doesn't hurt anything — £25,000 a year. He is going to marry me; I shall be a peeress of England. Tastes change with age. And besides, just as you come to love passionately women we find stupid and homely, because the charms they have are appreciable only by men, just so there are men insignificant and grotesque to you, who have irresistible qualities for us. For us women there are no homely men, there are no stupid men; there are two classes of men, — those who don't love us, who are like everybody, and those who do love us, who are not like anybody. The human heart! the human heart! Mystery.

De Cygneroi — So you love Lord Gamberfield better than you love me!

Lydia — More — I'm not sure about that; but differently, I am certain. Human nature has successive evolutions; and God has had the provident kindness, wishing to lead us up to the grave without too much fatigue for us, to scatter certain surprises around the bends of the road, which give us a fresh desire of life at the moment we think there is no more happiness for us but to die. That's what the ancients called metamorphoses.

De Cygneroi — He is Pygmalion, then?

Lydia — And I am Galatea, under the protection of Venus.

De Cygneroi — And you are to be married —

Lydia — In six months.

De Cygneroi — Did Pygmalion marry Galatea?

Lydia — He did, and had a child by her who was named Paphos, and who, in gratitude at what the goddess had done

for his mother, built her a temple which he called Paphos, and where lovers came to offer their sacrifices. There was, the fable says, a wonderful altar in the open air, on which burned a fire that no rain and no wind could extinguish.

De Cygneroi [*after a pause, speaks very low*] — Suppose we should go there?

Lydia — To Paphos?

De Cygneroi [*nodding his head*] — Yes.

Lydia [*giving him her hand*] — Good-bye, my friend; re-join your wife, and don't talk any more foolishness. Regret nothing: you have had the best there was of me!

De Cygneroi [*holding her back*] — Who would know of it?

Lydia — Myself first, and then He, who comes here every evening, and then your wife.

De Cygneroi — Fernande would never suspect anything: she's an innocent.

Lydia — And besides, she is nursing. [*Looking him in the face.*] How you despise me, don't you?

De Cygneroi — Lydia!

Lydia — No! Do you see me, loving you afresh and as I loved you of old and as I could love you to-day, losing you again?

De Cygneroi — Why lose me again?

Lydia [*with a movement of despair and struggle*] — You are married! you can't belong to me, you don't belong to yourself any more.

De Cygneroi — You were as much married yourself formerly: each in their turn.

Lydia — Good-bye!

De Cygneroi — And besides, I've no love for Fernande, you know very well.

Lydia — Why did you get married, then?

De Cygneroi — To do something else. I thought I should find an emotion that isn't there.

Lydia — Your word?

De Cygneroi — My word!

Lydia — Of honor?

De Cygneroi — Of honor!

Lydia [*aside*] — What dastardly wretches they are! [*Aloud.*] Then what matter my slips to me and your pledges to you, so long as we still love each other! Leave Paris under some pretext; go off with me, and let us pass a year together

in the bosom of solitude : and that's all I ask of you. In one year I shall be thirty, I shall be an old woman, I will give you back your liberty, I will disappear, you shall never hear me spoken of again. But at least, before reaching that point, I shall have loved utterly.

De Cygneroi — And if in a year I can't leave you ?

Lydia — Oh, don't say that to me, I should have too much happiness ! [*He goes to take her in his arms ; she stops him.*] It seems to me I hear your wife ! Go and find her again, take her away, I don't want to see her. Lebonnard will bring you further word from me. One hour more ! and we shall be reunited forever.

De Cygneroi — Forever !

[*Goes out.*]

SCENE VI.

Lydia [*waving her handkerchief as if to drive away foul air, wiping her mouth, and throwing the handkerchief on the table*] — Pfah !

Lebonnard [*entering*] — Well ?

Lydia — Well, you were right, my friend, it turns your stomach. He believed I had been the mistress of that Don Alfonso you invented, of that Lord Gamberfield I have never spoken a word to, and of you who are a loyal and devoted friend. I could have added a Turk and a Chinaman, — he'd have swallowed them like the others. And when he was thoroughly convinced of my infamy, when he thought that, thanks to all these debaucheries, I had become a common woman, something like Mlle. Castagnette — he began to love me, if one may use that sacred word to express the most brutal passion and the basest desire. Ah ! if we knew beforehand what I am just coming to know afterwards ! Pfah ! Get rid of that fellow for me, can't you ? If I needn't ever hear him mentioned again, if I could think he was dead, if I needn't know he had ever lived ! I'm going to take the air — I need it. I shall be here for dinner. I never would have believed you could despise so much what you had loved so much.

[*Goes out.*]

SCENE VII.

Lebonnard [*alone*] — She'll be here for dinner. We have it in three quarters of an hour. So I have forty good minutes

before me : that's twenty too many. [*To DE CYGNEROI, who is just entering.*] Got here. I was waiting for you impatiently.

De Cygneroi — You've seen Lydia ?

Lebonnard — She's going away from here. She's packing a little trunk. And you, you've done a fine job ! Damn ! — And your wife ?

De Cygneroi — My wife ? you're going back to Paris with her.

Lebonnard [*aside*] — “Get rid of that fellow for me !” — “Get rid of my wife for me !” — They are perfect ! [*Aloud.*] And what excuse shall I make to your wife ?

De Cygneroi — I told her I'd just got a dispatch that obliged me to leave at once.

Lebonnard — You didn't tell her where for ?

De Cygneroi — I didn't tell her where for.

Lebonnard — A dispatch here while you're making a call. She believed it ?

De Cygneroi — She'd believe any amount of others.

Lebonnard — She is ingenuous.

De Cygneroi [*after a pause*] — Yes.

Lebonnard — Then you are in love with Mme. de Morancé ?

De Cygneroi — In love ! In love ! The phrase is — ingenuous. I don't know if I'm in love : all I know is that there's a sensation there, and there aren't so many of those in the world, especially agreeable ones, that a man should let them slip by. I told you I was always frank and sincere : well, the truth is, I've no amusement the whole time between a nursing woman and a sucking baby. “Lolo, baby, dodo, tata,” — there's no fun in that forever, and yet I've got to have that sort of thing for at least a year, and then begin all over again. It's tedious !

Lebonnard — And your tirades this morning ?

De Cygneroi — That was this morning. They remain true theoretically, like a lot of other tirades, and they'll do for another time.

Lebonnard — Come, think a little ! A woman you found tiresome —

De Cygneroi — Oh, my dear fellow, it isn't the same woman ! If you had seen her just now, — if you had seen her moist eyes, if you had felt her burning sigh, if you knew what that Gamberfield has made of her ! There's a fellow, if he ever falls into my hands, — and he's sure of doing that to find out what's become of his wife-to-be, — there's a fellow that's bound to have

his currant-jelly face and his timothy whiskers set off with the finest pair of cuffs.

Lebonnard — As to me, I can't know at all what Gamberfield has made of Lydia : I was earlier, I am sorry to say.

De Cygneroi — Lebonnard, you'd better not call that up again. I shall strangle you, you see, while I'm waiting for the other fellow.

Lebonnard — Then you're going to leave ?

De Cygneroi — In ten minutes.

Lebonnard — You'll write to your wife ?

De Cygneroi — Yes, yes. I'll do everything that's necessary, don't worry.

Lebonnard — But suppose she learns the truth ?

De Cygneroi — She wouldn't believe it.

Lebonnard — Suppose they should prove it to her ?

De Cygneroi — You're to prove the contrary.

Lebonnard — And suppose she gets bored and revenges herself ?

De Cygneroi — She ? Never ! She'll never dream of it. Fortunately, she's got religion, and women like her don't have lovers, my dear fellow. It's good for —

Lebonnard [*aside*] — Admirable ! Men think they are jealous of certain women because they're in love with them ; it isn't true, — they're in love because they are jealous, which is very different. Prove to them that there's no reason why they should be jealous, and they perceive immediately that they're not in love.

De Cygneroi — What are you muttering to yourself there ?

Lebonnard — Excuse me, my dear fellow. Enough of this joking. Then you've fully decided to run off with Lydia ?

De Cygneroi — Yes.

Lebonnard — Which will last —

De Cygneroi — As long as it may, — perhaps six months, perhaps always ; till she loves me alone, as she loved all the rest.

Lebonnard — Then you must know the whole truth. Not a word of what I told you is true. Mme. de Morancé —

De Cygneroi [*interrupting*] — Thanks, Lebonnard, thanks, my excellent friend. Unfortunately, I know all that. A man tells his friend, in a moment of expansion, what he knows about the woman he has loved, because he thinks he doesn't love her any longer ; and then, when he sees that he loves her still, he

tries to take back what he has said and make things up again. Too thin, my boy, too thin!

Lebonnard — You don't believe me?

De Cygneroi — No, my boy, no.

Lebonnard — I affirm that Don Alfonso never existed. I am sorry to dispel that illusion, but he never existed.

De Cygneroi [*looking at his watch*] — Then it was Don somebody else, but it was Don somebody. My dear fellow, a woman who says, in the tone she said it to me, this phrase: "I was bored, that's how it began; he bored me, that's how it ended!" — a woman who expresses a state of mind in that way has gone through that state of mind, you hear me. Whether the man calls himself Alfonso or Galaor matters very little, — there's been a man.

Lebonnard — By everything that's most sacred in the world, that first lover is a pure invention. You were the first yourself.

De Cygneroi [*somewhat shaken*] — Perhaps; but that fellow Lord Gamberfield has existed. I've seen *him*. And besides, whether there's been three of them, whether there's been two, whether there hasn't been but one, — so long as there's been any of it at all, that's enough.

Lebonnard — There haven't been three, there haven't been two, there hasn't been one, there hasn't been anybody.

De Cygneroi — Would you kindly tell me, then, what interest Mme. de Morancé could have in making up those taradiddles for me?

Lebonnard — The pleasure of paying you back for your jealousy.

De Cygneroi — But on the contrary, she knew very well that I should despise her after such confessions, and never would see her again as long as I lived!

Lebonnard — How well men know themselves! It's a pleasure to see.

De Cygneroi — And besides, you weren't always there. There's been something, and something positive, that's obvious. It would be so natural! A woman alone, deserted!

Lebonnard — Mme. de Morancé was once at Havre and once at Lyons, with you. All the rest I invented myself, on my word of honor! And God knows what trouble I had to make her accept it, to make her understand it, to make her repeat the part she played just now, — very well, it would seem. Make

up your mind, my poor friend, she is irreproachable, and the spotted cat I've raked up isn't the skunk you imagine!

De Cygneroi — Nothing? nothing? nothing?

Lebonnard — Nothing.

De Cygneroi — Not the least little bit —

Lebonnard — Of a smitch or a skig.

De Cygneroi — So what she was just now —?

Lebonnard — She only had the air of being so, to pay you back. But now she sees that you love her still, she wants you to know — that is what I am charged to tell you — that you will find her once more, chaste, calm, modest, in a little house she has just rented some miles from Paris, where she will live all alone, and where you may come and see her whenever you are able, — for she will have no elopement nor a scandal. You can pass the day as of old, making music, talking, or reading. When you can't come she will write to you, through me.

De Cygneroi — Signing "Alfred"?

Lebonnard — "Alfred!" How sweet a life!

De Cygneroi — Wait a minute! Wait a minute!

Lebonnard — What's got hold of you?

De Cygneroi — I don't know: something ails me. Emotion, doubtless! The happiness of being still beloved. [*Calling.*] Fernande! Fernande!

Lebonnard [*aside*] — Aha, now!

SCENE VIII.

Fernande [*entering*] — Here I am, dear: what is it?

De Cygneroi — Where's your hat?

Fernande — Over there.

De Cygneroi [*getting the hat and putting it on her head askew*] — And the babelet?

Fernande — Here he is.

De Cygneroi — Let's go, then!

Fernande — But that dispatch?

De Cygneroi — I got another one. Countermanded! We're going back to Paris.

Fernande — Oh, you are not going to leave me. How delightful! [*Jumps for joy.*] I must go and say good-bye to Mme. de Morancé.

De Cygneroi — There's no use.

Fernande — Oh, what a funny house!

Lebonnard — Will you explain to me —

De Cygneroi — Huh ! don't you understand ? What a chump you are ! Why, you rascal, if it comes to living with an honest woman I don't need Mme. de Morancé : I've got my own.

Lebonnard [*playing surprise*] — Hoh ! [*Aside.*] Must put on an air of astonishment : if I don't he'll begin all over again. [*To CYGNEROI.*] She'll die of it this time.

De Cygneroi — No, you can arrange that,

[*Escapes with his wife, the maid, and the baby.*]

SCENE IX.

Lebonnard — So it ends with the woman's hate and the man's contempt. Then what's the good ?

Lydia [*entering*] — Have they gone ?

Lebonnard — Yes.

Lydia [*ringing*] — For always ?

Lebonnard — For always.

Lydia [*to the servant who comes in*] — Serve the dinner.

Lebonnard [*to the servant*] — And don't shake up the wine. [*To LYDIA, pressing her hand.*] The dregs are top bitter !

POSTSCRIPT BY THE AUTHOR.

(Preface to the play in collected edition.)

HERE is a little comedy which has aroused quite as much criticism and discussion as its bulkier sisters. What the author has been chiefly reproached with, is having insulted love. The author will content himself with replying to his accusers that perhaps they were in the wrong to use the word "love" there, where there was no place to employ it. He is well aware that the dictionary of our great linguist and positivist Littré gives this sufficiently elastic definition of love : "The sentiment of affection of one sex for the other ;" whence it would follow that it is enough for two persons of different sexes to have a sentiment of affection for each other, that they may be in love. The dictionary does not say, it is not its business to say, whether the two persons must be always the same or if a change is authorized : the whole question lies there, nevertheless, and by extending the word thus defined to its ultimate bounds and consequences, we shall arrive at giving it for synonyms "pas-

sion," "gallantry," "caprice," and "libertinage," as the sentiment of affection can be found in this or that proportion in these different manifestations. But the "Dictionary of the French Language" indicates only, so to say, the exterior signification of words in use. See then if in his "Dictionary of Medicine and Physiology," M. Littré, no longer merely a linguist, but a physiologist and philosopher, and moreover in collaboration with Charles Robin, — see if M. Littré does not define love in a fashion at once more precise and more extended: —

"LOVE — In physiology, the group of cerebral phenomena which constitute the sexual instinct. They themselves become the points of departure for a number of acts and actions, varying with individuals and social conditions, which render this group of phenomena very complex, and which often in turn are the source of aberrations which the hygienist and the medical legist are called on to anticipate or interpret, in order to know whether they have been accomplished under normal conditions or those of mental alienation. In the greater part of the mammals, and sometimes in man, the instinct of destruction comes into play at the same time as the sexual bent."

It is from the authentication of all these physiological phenomena, ranging from the sexual instinct to murder and madness, that have sprung, are springing, and will spring all the dramas, all the comedies, and all the romances; especially if you add the definition of Voltaire, in his "Philosophical Dictionary": —

"LOVE — There are so many kinds of love that one does not know which to address himself to in order to define it."

Have we to-day, we who are writing this preface, any pretension to be the one who shall define love? Far from us be that thought: more than any one else we are convinced that if there have been composed before us, and if there are still to be composed after us as in our own time, myriads of works on love, it is because no one knows, and no one ever will know absolutely, what he can rely on concerning this *sentiment of affection*, as varied and as uniform, as fixed and as mobile, as humanity itself, of which it is the principle and the eternity. Perhaps it may be well to content ourselves, for ultimate definition, with this very simple formula: "It's so." The truth is that when we have expounded all the reasonings, given all the counsels, created all the obstacles possible for a being who truly loves, he answers you, "I love," and there is nothing more to say to him, without being a fool. No other way of convincing him is left, except to kill him, — an irrefutable argument, which, despite the reputation that has been given us, we recommend using but moderately.

But in order that Pascal's sentence, "The heart has reasons the reason knows nothing of," may be just, that all our harangues may remain powerless before the single phrase "I love," he who says that word must love truly; and whatever Voltaire may say of it, love that has the right to be called love carries with it certain signs that separate it from passion, from gallantry, and from the other physio-

logical grades we spoke of above, which the "Dictionary of Medicine" foreshows, and which cause the romances, the comedies, the tragedies, and the dramas on love to be eternally rewritten.

There is always, I am well aware, one moment when the physical expression of the sentiment of one sex for the other is invariably the same, and serves uniformly and finally for all the different states of love; but that is not a reason for concluding that there is only one love. It is with these different states as with different lodgers in the same house: they do not know each other, they do not even bow when they meet; they use the same stairway, that is all.

Evidently it was in the general sense that Sarcey took the word "Love" when he wrote his article on the "Wedding Call,"—an article I have before me, and which I ask his permission shortly to quote, with an intention he already divines. I have the gift—and very proud of it I am—of preoccupying, of charming, of stirring up, of irritating—in short, of impassioning Sarcey, who is certainly one of the most sincere and most loyal critics that have ever existed. He has another great quality; that is, of the first impression, like the public itself. That first impression he utters immediately in his first article, without weighing it, without otherwise discussing it. Some days later, if the work seems to him worth the trouble, he returns to hear it anew; and if he gains an impression contrary to the first, he utters that with the same frankness. He does not blush at being deceived; he does not believe himself infallible, at least in his judgments. I will not say as much of his ideas and his theories, which he believes to be absolute truth, and imposes, or rather sometimes exposes, with more violence than authority. This fashion of being altogether right does not displease me; it is a little my own. If it smells of obstinacy, even of pride, it proves conviction, and the criticism takes on more color, movement, and interest. Sarcey is enthusiastic and crabbed. He is as ready to proclaim you a great man as to call you an idiot. A work pleases him, and it is a masterpiece; it displeases him, and it is a dunghill. It would be as amusing as impossible, and above all fruitless, to argue with him. He answers, if you venture on it, "You understand nothing about it," and turns his back on you, convinced that that argument is irrefutable. He cannot always be just, because he is impassioned; but he is always impartial. He seats himself in his stall without prejudgment of any sort, whoever may be the author of the piece, with the liveliest desire to be interested, and especially amused. No one is more easily disarmed by laughter or tears than he; at heart he loves best to laugh. What he will endure least is that a theatrical work shall compel him to reflect. He thinks he reflected once for all while at the Normal School: he has classified his reflections; he has made them about laws, politics, literature, religion, and he does not wish

them disarranged. That is where I sometimes upset him, and he consigns me to all the devils; but I do not go there, and we remain good friends. He has certainly written more than a fat volume on me alone. I have always desired to thank him publicly for the interest in me he has so often evinced. I will do it to-day, with the greater pleasure that we shall perhaps find ourselves more completely in accord than when he declared "La Dame aux Camélias" and "Le Demi-Monde" to be two masterpieces, — my modesty not permitting me on that point to go as far as he.

Here is Sarcey's article: —

FEUILLETON IN THE *Temps*, OCTOBER 16, 1871. THEATRICAL CHRONICLE.

How embarrassed one is in stating his judgment on the younger Alexandre Dumas' new piece! This is because in order to state a judgment it is necessary to have one, very sharp and very precise, which can be formulated and upheld by proofs. The impression one carries away from that strange work is of the most mingled character; he finds it hard on leaving to compose his spirits, to collect his ideas, to recognize himself in this huddle of contradictory sentiments through which he has passed. I saw the first representation, and I returned to the Gymnase to listen to the fourth; I was able on that second hearing to study at leisure the public, — a public which this time was the true one, the one which pays, which carries to the theater the prejudices and the taste of the day. I am still not quite settled.

Talent there is in it, and much; that admits of no question. A work cannot be mediocre that excites a curiosity so lively and discussions so impassioned. And wit! that wit which makes everything go in France — the piece is full of it; it is a glittering fire of words, some profound and bitter, others humorous, all bold and novel. *Why then do we not taste in hearing them a pleasure without alloy? Why do they make you experience that singular sensation of a cold blade some one is about to slip into your back? Brrr — ! you shrug your shoulders and shiver! Why do you depart from there oppressed, nervous, discontented with yourself and everybody else, finding the boulevard less gay, the gas-lights less brilliant, and the women less enticing? Why do you feel thoroughly morose, and as though irritated with the human race? Why can you not unravel in yourself the cause of this mournful surprise and this evil humor?*

The effect is certain. I have experienced it in myself, and all that I have questioned are unanimous on that point. They are entertained, because to experience a strong sensation, even though not an agreeable one, is still an entertainment; because anything is better than insipid mediocrity; because there is a certain element of secret pleasure in that irritation, which arouses and titillates the fibres of taste. But it is not that full and sweet satisfaction, that quietude of contentment, given by truly good works which are at the same time beautiful. This is not saying that if out of all that sparkle of wit I was dazzled with for an hour, there remained to me on leaving the theater only a sort of enervation, which outside was transmuted into either a dull wrath or a dreadful moral fatigue, it was necessarily the fault of the author. I am perhaps still ignorant exactly where it lies; but to harry up people is not the goal of art, it is the reverse of art.

Let him try to instruct me, well and good; let him sadden my soul, I consent to it: but I wish that sadness to be open and tender; I wish that instruction to contain a pleasure from satisfied sensibility; I wish — I do not know just what I

wish. I know to a wonder what. I do not wish : I do not wish to be harried up, — there ! Is that intelligible ? Dumas perpetually gives me morality : I listen to it, I find it sound, and I go out worse than I came in. Reformed ? that is not in question : the theater never reformed anybody, and it is not a sermon I go there after. But anyway he might broaden my spirit, and here all my being shrinks. It seems as if a sharp dry wind, one of those east winds that set the nerves on edge, had blown over my face and puckered up the corners of my lips. Oh, how gladly one would break a dish or a chair !

I am well aware that this is not a judgment I am formulating : it is only a sensation I am depicting. But surely one cannot bar out feeling from his criticism ? I appeal to all who have seen the new piece ; I appeal to all you who will see it — for it is highly probable you will all go there. Admirers or adversaries, is not this what you have experienced ? The degree does not matter : each feels as he can. But did you laugh a frank and wholesome laugh ? Did you weep kind soft tears ? You didn't, did you ? And if you did laugh — I listened to it yesterday, that laugh excited by certain phrases of the younger Dumas, and studied its special qualities of sound : it is the scandal laugh. It bears some relation to the one you hear at the Comédie Française, when there are a great many women in the audience, and some comedy of Molière is being played where the word *lavement* comes in, or some other that sounds to modern ears like an incongruity. The reason is that Dumas talks on the stage about things which in the moral order make an effect on the imagination that is — medicinal. Oh yes, we take medicine in private life, but good heavens ! we don't get fifteen hundred people together to tell them the consequences. We attend to these dirtinesses in the silence of the closet.

Dumas' entire play is summed up in this sentence, which one of the characters utters at the end : " There's all that is left of adultery, — the woman's hate and the man's contempt. Well, then, what's the good of it ? " And on this fine axiom, here is Dumas, enchanted to have founded a moralist ! He may be sure that moral will never persuade anybody ! Can you hinder anything with a " what's the good ? " Indeed ! one might answer Dumas junior : what's the good ? to be happy six months, a year, ten years, — what do I know how long ? All men are not like the one you represent ; all love affairs are not conducted in such a cruel and ignoble fashion ! There are, even in irregularity, honest hearts which respect their sworn faith all the more that the oath has not received the legal sanction. From the moment I have nothing but " what's the good " before me, I'll risk it.

Nor in the main would Dumas achieve any greater results against vice by undertaking to combat it on the stage in some other fashion. I return to that still : the theater never reformed and never will reform anybody. It can act only by opening the soul to higher ideas, to nobler sentiments ; dispose it to make good resolutions, and render their execution easier for it. But what enrages me against him is the claim he sets up to be fashioning morality, when there is nothing — well, I will soften the word, for it burns my lips — more demoralizing than this sort of spectacles.

He familiarizes imaginations with this idea of adultery, which we wish to make shocking to them. He teaches them to consider it in cold blood. For Dumas does not suspect this : that what makes the lack in his analysis, fine and cold as steel, is his not loving women, or if you like, woman. She is for him only a subject of dissection. He does not compassionate her fall, he does not get angry at it : in this performance of misery, wounds, and blood, he sees only a " what's the good ? " Take and wring this new comedy, and you will squeeze out ingenious ideas, brilliant phrases, theories where truth assumes the air of paradox ; but I will bet my head that not one moving phrase, not one poor little tear will drop. It is as dry as a chip.

I am losing my temper, and I am wrong. It is because, really, I am angry with myself for admiring so greatly what seems to me so detestable. I am wasting breath, but what would you have? It is so personal, so venturesome, so brilliant; there is in it such a sureness of hand, such a powerful weightiness of execution; all this brutality is covered up by so much wit that there is no means of resisting it. We are furious with that pestilent fellow, but he inveigles and he vanquishes; we let ourselves accept whatever he says.

You have heard of that old-time preacher, Father Andrew, who preached virtue in language and with similes fit to make a dragoon blush. None the less he was applauded and laughed with: he had good humor and talent. Dumas resembles him. He gives the best of counsels to the world, in the language that adorns at once the manuals of physiology and Marcelin's "*Parisian Life*." It all goes, through force of wit. But since he has so much, why not use it on something else? Again Dumas has won the bet he made against the impossible: he is well ahead! They are saying everywhere in Paris, at this moment: "Nobody in the world but him could have made that go down! What audacity and what talent!"

And as for me, I whisper, in the words of the play, What's the good? There is plenty of audacity in pure waste and talent ill employed! He writes plays now in the same style as his prefaces. There is the same taste for physiological and moral studies, the same art of setting off commonplace maxims of virtue by a bold cynicism of metaphors; and the curiousness of crude details expressed more crudely still. I seem to see in them the libertinism of degraded imagination working itself up: Michelet's "*Love*," without Michelet's outpourings of tenderness.

And after all this, I have still not said what the question raised in the "*Wedding Call*" is. This is because in truth it is no serious task. Play there is none, properly speaking. The story is utterly preposterous. Never could it be admitted that a woman who had retained any dignity in her fall would lend herself to the horrible comedy she plays to unmask her bygone lover. This is all Greek to you; but it would require entering into too many details to explain more clearly. Go and see the play. It is worth the trouble. I have seen it twice, and it has passionately interested me, the second time as much as the first. You may be harried up, furious; it will never leave you indifferent. There is not a single tiny spot for inattention and yawning.

Moreover, I should have some scruple about telling you the drama. Dumas, by an exceedingly bold and dangerous manœuvre, to which he is wonted, has contrived to keep the public mystified up to the very last scene. Authors commonly make a confidant of the public by half letting it into the secret of the intrigues they are weaving: Dumas has preferred to make it a dupe, sure of mastering the ill humor of that deception. There is no need, therefore, of spoiling his subject by an exact analysis.

Well, my dear Sarcey, as I said to you above, we are in accord. This impression you have experienced, the actors at the rehearsals have experienced like you and before you; and greatly pleased I am, for that impression, profound and almost mournful, is what I wished to be experienced. I was not framing an idyll, I was framing a satire; more than a satire, an execution. One should not strike a woman even with roses, says the Oriental proverb; but for the man, it is an excellent thing to strike him when he deserves to be struck, and it is the man I was striking. I denounced, I betrayed my sex for the benefit of woman, whom you accuse me of not

loving. Can one prove to people that he loves them only by compassionating their slips and weeping over their sins, and has not the proverb "he who loves much punishes much" its reason for existence with him who has charge of souls? You reproach me also for treating adultery as a trifle;—the bogus kind, yes. Mme. de Morancé speaks lightly of the first three lovers she had, but only because she did not have them; and adultery is to her a thing so serious that she lends herself, in order to know its depths and save herself from them, to this hoax you aver that no woman would lend herself to. And Hermione, when she listens to Orestes' declaration that he loves her, and when she promises to marry him if he will kill Pyrrhus—does she not lend herself to a very different combination from Mme. de Morancé's? But, you will tell me, "Andromache" is a tragedy. So is the "Wedding Call." It has not five acts, it is not in verse, it is not by Racine unfortunately; laughter often breaks out there, because we often laugh around those who are suffering: but it is a tragedy,—it is the greatest, the most formidable tragedy of woman. Celibacy, marriage, and adultery—that is the tragic trilogy where women's life struggles, that is whence we dramatic poets can draw eternally, but the one of the three phases where the tragedy is the most poignant is evidently the last, since not alone the ideal, but modesty, honor, reputation, conscience, the woman's very life, are at stake! And you would not give the theater, which, if it has not the merit of reforming, has the right of warning and the right of ascertaining—you would not give the theater the power of saying to the woman: "Take care: at the bottom of this illegitimate love where you are risking your ideal, your modesty, your honor, your reputation, your conscience, your life, there may well remain to you, along with dishonor and remorse, only your hate for the beloved man and the beloved man's contempt for you. Look, if only for once, if only for an hour, look at the abyss, measure the fall, breathe the miasms, and save yourself still if there is time!" All men are not thus, you tell me, and there are those for whom the oath is all the more sacred that it has not been made according to law;—they are rare. The case I submit to you presents itself not ninety-nine times out of a hundred, but nine hundred and ninety-nine times out of a thousand. That is why I have the right to submit it to you.

You might tell me, apropos of another comedy of mine which you fought still more sharply in its time, "The Women's Friend,"—you might tell me that you knew women better than I, and that you had often been their confidant. I have no need to remind you, my dear Sarcey, that it is not alone by what women tell us that we have to know them, but also and above all by what they do not tell us. If they knew themselves well enough for us to understand what they are, they would not so often fall into the snares men lay for

them — gross snares, of which in this play I have shown them the mechanism and the danger. No matter. Since a number of women have given you their confidences, you must have remarked that those confidences all have the same point of departure: a first error in love affairs. You have not failed to meet women who, well born, rich, with good connections and good instincts, have slipped up not once but many times, and fallen from that world where I left Mme. de Morancé, into that *Half-World* [*Demi-Monde*] you love so well, where I made Mme. de Santis fall, to the threshold of which I led Mme. de Lornan. Ask these outcast women how they came to tumble from marriage into gallantry, and from respect into scorn: they will all tell you, if they are sincere — and women are always sincere when sincerity can be an excuse for them — they will all tell you what Mme. de Morancé tells: the ideal in the first instance, spite in the second, gallantry in the third, letting themselves go in the fourth, curiosity of sensation and finally libertinage in the rest.

This does not seem to you worth the trouble of saying, and saying rudely, with asperity, and by utilizing wit, laughter, and all the surprises of the theater. You would have there consolations, pityings, and tears, counter-pictures perhaps where adulterous love shall be happy; that is, like Cardinal Perron I think, after I have proved that God exists you want me to prove that he doesn't exist, which is equivalent to sustaining a thesis to prove nothing at all. Consolations, pityings, and tears — you will find them, and more than there ought to be of them, in the plays of my brethren. It is by dint of this very emotionalizing and weeping over woman's sin that it has been rendered excusable and easy. But still, since we were at the theatre, I wished that for just this once my data should be fictitious. It is a hoax which Mme. de Morancé plays, on the advice which a true friend of women like you would be the first to give to-morrow to a woman in the same case. "Play for just half an hour the comedy I'll give you the plot of," you would say to her, "and you will know what you can depend on with that man who still occupies your thoughts, and whom you ought to expel from your mind and your heart because he is unworthy of you."

This is pretty exactly what I have tried to say to women in the "Wedding Call": "All this didn't happen, ladies, but it might happen, and then, oh the shame!" It is a little like the story we used to tell at college, of the Provençal who suddenly boxed his boy's ears, and the boy said, "Why, papa, I didn't do anything;" to which he replied, "Then judge a little what it would be if you had done something."

The theater, my dear Sarcey, is not the theater, it is nothing but a show, if, a subject being given, we may not carry it out to its ultimate consequences. It is because it is logical and merciless that it

makes so much use of laughter and of tears. Amid the laughter and tears we slip in the instruction it is our mission to impart, and which the public in its heart takes kindly of us, although it does not profit by it. You, the critic, have no business to say to me, "You ought not to choose such a subject:" you have to see if from the subject chosen I have drawn all the advantage I might draw. You regret that in the "Wedding Call" there was not a tear: that tear ought not to be found there. The dirty linen I washed in public cannot be washed in tears.

Laughter, then, sufficed me; acrid, bitter, white-hot laughter, such as we have to apply in certain cases. I know a young mother who worshiped her baby, who worshiped a little dog. The little dog, worshiped as he was, went mad and bit the baby on the cheek. Do you know what the mother did? She heated a shovel red-hot, and thrust and rubbed the glowing iron into the wound. The baby struggled and cried, the mother paid no attention, and the child was saved. There was a scar, it is true, but it lived. Would you prefer to have had the mother fall to weeping? There are cases when we need to put the shovels in the fire instantly, and adultery is one of those cases. "What does it matter," you say, "if I can be happy a year, ten years, what do I know how long?" And the other party, the woman who has rendered you happy, what becomes of her? She passes to somebody else, or resigns herself: it is no concern of yours. You have been happy, that is the important thing.

Are you sure you are not more cruel with your philosophy than I with my red-hot shovel?

Shall I tell you everything? Why not, as we are conversing and both sincere. When M. de Cygueroi, in his scene with Lebonnard, makes a chemical analysis of adultery, it is I that am speaking. I am with him; for it is not nine hundred and ninety-nine times out of a thousand, it is nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine times out of ten thousand, that I disbelieve there is what you call love in adultery. Once out of ten thousand it may exist; that is all I will concede to you. That once my comedy is useless, because the man has said to the woman, "Give me your honor, and I will give you my life." That engagement made and stuck to, we are no longer in adultery, we are in love, and love excuses everything. But as I said to you at the outset, it must be love, true love; and that is as rare as true genius, as true virtue, as true good sense, as all that is true indeed. Many are called, few are chosen, and not all are fit.

Nevertheless, I will acknowledge, passion may sometimes have the honor of being confounded with love. It can deceive others, for it often deceives itself; which is not done by either gallantry, caprice, or libertinage, which know very well and beforehand what they want. Passion has ardors, sincerities, eloquences, often irresistible. It can even attain to the merits and the triumphs of love,

if the being who is its sole object remains its sole object during the entire lifetime of the one who experiences it. For example, Des Grieux. Here we are in the midst of passion; and gambling, trickery, murder, make up our hero's train. The object of this passion, Manon, is absolutely unworthy to inspire love. She wins pity only by a punishment she cannot escape; she wins absolution only by a death she cannot shun. She does not atone voluntarily and by an effort of her own. Then why does Des Grieux, amid all his faults, attain elevation to the rank of the true lovers, the immortal lovers? Why do you feel him to be the peer of Paul and Romeo, although Manon be not the peer of Virginia or Juliet? Because the unworthiness of the object no more changes the quality of the love than the coarseness of the glass changes the quality of the wine. As Des Grieux loves no one but Manon; as nothing allows us to suppose, as he could not himself admit the thought, that another woman could ever occupy his heart again; as he leaves her whom he loves only when she is dead, after having done everything to save her, after having wished to die with her, — we descry in that passion, guilty but sole, the same worth as in love.

It is none the less true that — as was said by one of our friends who sought for the true significance of words in analogies rather than in roots — the word *passion* comes from the verb *to pass*. In fact, if passion has for excuse its belief that it must be eternal, it has for ordinary and fatal character the not being so.

However great may be a fire, whatever gleams it may shed on the sky, to whatever extent it may ravage, it always ends by going out; and the more it burns, the more brilliant it is, then the more it leaves behind of ruins, of despair, of misery, of solitude!

Such is passion, — it ravages and consumes by its own fire; while love occupies a whole life, however long it may be, and so that at the hour of death enough is still remaining to fill eternity. You have not loved, if you have not believed that after death you will still go on loving, eternally young, eternally fair, the being you have loved on earth, whether she has gone before you or is to follow you in death. That, without doubt, is why the idea and almost the desire of death so easily unites itself in a man's spirit with the greatest intoxications of love. Life seems too short and too contracted to hold all he experiences, and the eternity which the Divine love promises him seems neither too lofty nor too spacious for the expansion of his terrestrial love. Love, contrary to passion, feeds and renews itself unceasingly from its own hearth, without being able to exhaust itself. It is not the terrestrial fire, it is the divine fire; it is not a chance, it is not an unforeseen shock that gives it birth, it is the universal harmony that creates it. Love is the sun of the soul; and that is why love is all warmth, all movement, all creation, all light. There are not two loves any more than there are two suns. One can

have two passions; he never has two loves! Whoever has loved twice has not loved at all, that is absolute.

The poets, who are, if not the sole, at least the prime confidants of God, — the poets, that is to say, those who know without having learned, those who divine, — the poets are not mistaken in this.

When they wish to introduce into art a new type of love, they never deviate from this principle: one sole love in one sole life. Philemon and Baucis, Hero and Leander, Orpheus and Eurydice, Paolo and Francesca da Rimini, Romeo and Juliet, Paul and Virginia: love single and eternal.

Does one of two lovers remain indifferent or become unfaithful? the love of the other only increases by what the beloved being has lost of its own. It is Dido who dies from the desertion of Æneas; it is Calypso who cannot be consoled for the departure of Ulysses; it is Menelaus who pardons Helen, just as Des Grieux pardons Manon.

Are we mistaken? Have we wrongly glorified love in couples? Does history come, proof in hand, and call upon us to recognize our error? Does it remain evident that Raphael died of the pleurisy and not of his love for La Fornarina; that Petrarch's Laura was an honest wife, mother of a dozen legitimate children; that Tasso loved and sung two different Eleonoras?

The ideal of a single love is so necessary to man's imagination, that we answer truly: "It is you who are deceived, and our memory and our sympathy restore and maintain the tradition of Raphael and La Fornarina, of Laura and Petrarch, of Eleonora and Tasso. They are no longer facts, perhaps: let them become legends."

Such is the distinctive character of love, — unity, eternity; and thence, but on this condition alone, it can exist in all situations, in spite of all obstacles.

This love gives eternity to those who experience it; it gives immortality to those who sing of it. Glory to those who sing of and experience it at once!

Unfortunately, not all poets have the genius of Virgil, Dante, and Shakespeare for depicting love; but all have souls elevated enough to perceive it, large enough to comprehend it, delicate enough to respect it; and whoever accuses a poet of having besmirched love will always be making an unjust accusation. Poets sometimes curse love when it has made them suffer or disdained them, never do they scorn it; and as to the satirizing of false lovers they have done, it is only one more homage rendered to the true. It is not insulting a lion to deride an ass wrapped up in his skin.

There, my dear Sarcey, is almost all I have to say to you to-day on this subject; and I think I shall have said quite all, when I have assured you afresh of my sentiments of gratitude and friendship.

GIBOYER'S SON.

BY ÉMILE AUGIER.

(Translated for this work by Forrest Morgan.)

[ÉMILE AUGIER, perhaps next to Dumas junior the most effective French dramatist of the century, was born at Valence in 1820; grandson of Pigault-Lebrun (De l'Épinoÿ), the novelist and dramatist. He began life as a lawyer, but turned to the stage; at first on lines of conventional sentiment and the Classical school; then he became a social satirist—at first rather light and genial, then increasingly penetrating, mordant, and sometimes intensely bitter. He produced twenty-four plays in all,—the first, “The Hemlock” (classical), in 1844; “An Upright Man,” in 1845; then followed “The Adventurers” (1848), “Gabrielle” (1849), “The Flute-Player” (1850), “Diana” (1852), “The Touchstone” (1852), “Philibert” (1853), all except “The Flute-Player” comedies with conventional morals and no purpose but to please. He then began a series of social and political satires, beginning with “M. Poirier's Son-in-Law,” in 1854; then came “Olympia's Marriage” and “The Golden Belt” (1855), “Youth” and “The Poor Lions” (1858), “A Fine Marriage” (1859), “Brass” [*Les Effrontés*] (1861), “Giboyer's Son” (1862), whose hero had already figured in the foregoing, “Master Guérin” (1864), “Contagion” (1866), “Paul Forestier” (1868), “The Postscript” (1869), “Lions and Foxes” (1869), “Jean de Thommeray” (1873), “Madame Caverlet” (1876), “The Fourchaubaults” (1878). In a few he collaborated with others, but all the strongest work is his own. He wrote other matters of small account; was elected to the Academy in 1858; and died in 1889.]

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

WHATEVER has been said, this comedy is not a political piece, in the current sense of the word: it is a social piece. It attacks and defends only ideas, an abstraction made from every form of government.

Its proper title would be *The Clericals*, if that vocable were in theatrical currency.

The party it designates counts in its ranks men of all origins, partisans of the Empire as well as partisans of the elder branch and the cadet branch of the Bourbons. Maréchal, actual deputy, the Marquis d'Auberive, and Couturier of Haut-Sarthe, old parliamentarian,—represent in my comedy three fractions of the Clerical party, united in hate or fear of the democracy; and if Giboyer lumps all three under the denomination *Legitimists*, it is because in reality Legitimists alone are logical, and do not renounce assailing the spirit of '89.

The antagonism of the ancient principle and the modern principle—here then is the subject of my play. I defy any one to find a word exceeding this question, and I am in the habit of saying things frankly enough to leave no one the right of making double meanings for me.

Whence come, then, the clamors which have arisen against my comedy? By what Clerical shift has the anger of parties it does not touch been roused against it? By what falsification of my words do people manage to feign belief that I am attacking fallen governments? Certainly, it is adroit tactics for exciting against me a chivalric sentiment which has an echo in all honest hearts; but where are these enemies I have struck to the earth? I see them erect at all the tribunes; they are in train to scale the car of triumph, and when I dare, wretched me, to pull them off by the legs, they turn indignantly around and cry, "Respect the vanquished!"

Really, it is too amusing!

A more plausible reproach they make against me is of having resorted to personalities.

I have resorted to but one; that is Déodat. But reprisals are so legitimate against that insulter, and he is moreover so well armed for self-defense!

As to the important and justly honored statesman I am accused of having put on the stage [Thiers], I protest energetically against that imputation: none of my characters have the least resemblance to him, near or remote. I know the rights and duties of comedy as well as my adversaries; it should respect persons, but it has a right over things. I have seized upon a fact of contemporary history which seemed to me a striking and singular symptom of the confused state of our minds; I have taken nothing but what directly appertains to my subject, and I have taken care to alter the circumstances so as to remove every characteristic of personality. What more can be asked of me?

Shall I answer those who reproach my comedy with having been authorized, — that is to say, with existing? The point is delicate. If it is permissible to compare small things with great, I would ask these precisians, Who ever dreamed of reproaching "Tartufe" with the toleration of Louis XIV.?

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

MARQUIS D'AUBERIVE, leading member of Clerical aristocrats.

COUNT D'OUTREVILLE, his kinsman, pupil of the Jesuits.

BARONESS SOPHIE PFEFFERS, rich adventuress.

COUTURIER OF HAUT-SARTHE, VISCOUNT DE VRILLIÈRE, CHEVALIER DE GERMOISE, members of the Conservative Committee.

MME. DE LA VIEUXTOUR, one of the ancient nobility.

MARÉCHAL, parvenu Deputy; his wife; and his putative daughter, FERNANDE.

GIBOYER, venal journalist.

MAXIMILIEN GERARD, Maréchal's secretary, protégé of Giboyer.

DUBOIS, the Marquis' valet.

ACT I.

Scene: Private room of the aged MARQUIS D'AUBERIVE. Door at end. At the right of the door, a book-case; at the left, case of armor and weapons. Front wing left, a fireplace, near which are a small sofa and a round table. Larger table in the center.

SCENE I.

MARQUIS *breakfasting at the round table*; DUBOIS, *napkin over arm, holding a bottle of sherry in his hand.*

Marquis — I think my appetite has fully returned.

Dubois — Yes, my Lord Marquis, and returned from far off. Who would say, to see you now, that you were getting over a sickness? You've got a new-married face.

Marquis — Think so?

Dubois — And I'm not the only one. All the old women in the neighborhood say to me: "M. Dubois, that man" — (saying your Lordship's presence) — "that man will get married again, and more likely sooner than later. He's got wife in his eye."

Marquis — Oh! the old women say that, do they?

Dubois — Perhaps they a'n't so far wrong.

Marquis — Understand, M. Dubois, that when one has had the misfortune to lose an angel like the Marquise d'Auberive, he has not the least desire to marry another. Pour me a drink.

Dubois — I understand that; but my Lord Marquis has no heir, and that's very hard lines.

Marquis — And who tells you I could have one?

Dubois — Oh, I'm perfectly sure of it!

Marquis — Do you know it as a Corvisart?¹

Dubois — Corvisart?

Marquis — I don't care to be a father *in partibus infidelium*;² that's why. Widower I am and widower I'll stay: you can tell the old women so.

Dubois — But your name, my Lord Marquis? That old name of D'Auberive, are you going to let that die out? Permit an old servant to feel bad about it.

¹ *I.e.*, from medical examination. Corvisart was a great physician under Napoleon; introducer of auscultation and percussion.

² *I.e.*, the titular head of a district actually served by humbler casuals.

Marquis — Great heavens, my good fellow, don't be more royalist than the king!

Dubois — Then what would you have me turn into? If there aren't any more D'Auberives in the world, who shall I serve?

Marquis — You've saved money: you'll live like a business man; you'll be your own master.

Dubois — What a fall! I shall never lift my head again. Your old servant will follow you into the grave.

Marquis — Keeping your distance, please! — You melt my heart, Dubois: dry your tears, everything isn't desperate.

Dubois — What! my master will yield to my humble prayers?

Marquis — No, my good fellow: I've done my time and I am not going back to service. But I cling to my name as much as you can yourself, be assured, and I have found an extremely ingenious combination to perpetuate it without exposing myself.

Dubois — How happy I feel! I don't dare ask your Lordship —

Marquis — And quite right! Stick to that modesty, and let it be enough to know that I am preparing Auberives for you. I am expecting this very day — I am expecting a great deal of company to-day.

Dubois — Oh, best of masters!

Marquis — You are a good fellow, and I shall not forget you.

Dubois [*aside*] — I count on that solid.

Marquis — Clear off the table: I am going for a horseback ride at two.

Baroness Pfeffers [*appearing in the doorway*] — Horseback!

Dubois [*announces*] — Her ladyship the Baroness Pfeffers!

[*Goes out.*]

SCENE II.

Marquis — Well, dear Baroness, what can have gained an old bachelor like me the honor of so charming a visit?

Baroness — Really, Marquis, that's what I am wondering. Now that I see you I don't know in the least why I have come, and I've a great mind to go straight back.

Marquis — Now sit down, hateful woman.

Baroness — Not much! What, you close your doors for a week, your people wear tragic faces, you put your friends in a fright, you are already mourned — and when I get inside at you, I surprise you at table!

Marquis — I'll tell you: I'm an old flirt, and I wouldn't show myself for an empire when I'm out of temper; now the gout changes my character entirely; it makes me unrecognizable: that's why I hide.

Baroness — Great relief! I'll hurry and reassure our friends.

Marquis — They are not so anxious as all that. Give me a little news about them.

Baroness — But there's one of them in my carriage waiting for me.

Marquis — I'll send and tell him to please come up.

Baroness — But I'm not sure if -- if you know him.

Marquis — What's his name?

Baroness — I met him by chance —

Marquis — And took all the chances of bringing him. [*Rings.*] You are a mother to me. [*To DuBois, who answers the bell.*] Go down and you will find a clergyman in the Baroness' carriage: tell him I thank him very much for his kind alacrity, but I'm not disposed to die this morning.

Baroness — O Marquis! what would our friends say if they heard you?

Marquis — Pooh! I'm the irrepressible child of the party, that's understood — and its spoiled child. Dubois, say also that the Baroness begs the reverend gentleman to drive home and send her carriage back here for her.

Baroness — Permit —

Marquis — That's all right. — Go on, Dubois. — Now you are my prisoner.

Baroness — But, Marquis, this is hardly proper.

Marquis [*kissing her hand*] — Flatterer! — Sit down, this time, and let's talk of serious things, Madame Egeria. [*Taking a newspaper from the table.*] The gout doesn't hinder me from reading the paper. Do you know poor Déodat's death¹ is a cruel blow?

Baroness — Ah, what a loss! what a disaster for our cause!

Marquis — I have wept for him.

Baroness — What talent! what spirit! what sarcasm!

Marquis — He was the hussar of orthodoxy. He will live in our calendar as the *angelic pamphleteer* — *conviciator* [*reviler*] *angelicus*. And now that his grand shade is on deck —

Baroness — You speak very lightly of it, Marquis.

¹ Suspension of Louis Veuillot's paper; *constructive* death of the editor. See article following.

Marquis — When I've wept for him! — let's set to work finding some one to replace him.

Baroness — Say some one to succeed him. Heaven doesn't create two such men in succession.

Marquis — And if I told you I had put my hand on his duplicate? — Yes, Baroness, I have unearthed a devilish, cynical, virulent pen, that crackles and spatters; a lad that will lard his own father with epigrams for a modest compensation, and eat him like celery for five francs more.

Baroness — Allow me: — Déodat was sincere.

Marquis — Stuff! that's the result of the fight: there are no mercenaries any longer in the thick of a battle; the blows they get produce conviction in them. I don't give our man a week to belong to us body and soul.

Baroness — If you have no other guaranties of his fidelity —

Marquis — I have: I've got him.

Baroness — Where?

Marquis — No matter! I've got him.

Baroness — And what are you waiting for before presenting him?

Marquis — For him first, his consent next. He lives at Lyons; I expect him to get here to-day or to-morrow. Give him time to finish his toilet, and I'll introduce him.

Baroness — Meantime, shall I apprise the committee of your find?

Marquis — I beg you, no. — And speaking of the committee, dear Baroness, it would be very kind of you to use your influence over it in a matter which touches me personally.

Baroness — My influence over it is not large.

Marquis — Is that modesty, or the exordium of a refusal?

Baroness — If it absolutely must be one or the other, it's modesty.

Marquis — Well, then, my lovely friend, learn — if you don't know it — that those gentlemen owe you too many obligations to refuse you anything.

Baroness — Because my parlor serves for their meeting-place?

Marquis — Primarily; but the true, the great, the inestimable service you render them every day, is to have superb eyes.

Baroness — Scoffer! it's well for you to pay attention to such things as that.

Marquis — Well for me, yes; but still better for those sedate men, as their chaste vows don't go beyond that mystic sensuality which is the orgy of virtue.

Baroness — You're dreaming!

Marquis — You can rely on what I say. That and nothing else is the reason why all the serious clubs invariably choose for headquarters the drawing-room of some woman, either handsome or clever: you are both, madame — judge of your empire.

Baroness — You are too wheedling: your cause must be detestable.

Marquis — If it was first-rate, I could gain it myself.

Baroness — Come, don't keep me on tenter-hooks.

Marquis — It's just here: we've got to choose our spokesman in the House for the campaign we are preparing against the University [muzzling of Renan]; I want the choice to fall --

Baroness — On M. Maréchal.

Marquis — You have hit it.

Baroness — Are you serious, Marquis? M. Maréchal?

Marquis — Yes, I know — but we've no need of a thunder-bolt of eloquence, since we furnish the speech. Maréchal reads as fluently as anybody, I assure you.

Baroness — We've already made him a deputy on your recommendation, and that was a good deal.

Marquis — Allow me! Maréchal is an excellent recruit.

Baroness — You are pleased to say so.

Marquis — How disgusted you are! An old subscriber to the *Constitutionnel* [conservatively liberal organ], a liberal, a Voltairian [anti-clerical], who goes over to the enemy with arms and baggage — what more do you want? M. Maréchal is not a man, my dear: he is the great middle class coming over to us. As for me, I love this honest middle class, which holds the Revolution in horror now it has nothing more to gain by it, which wants to congeal the wave that has floated it in, and reconstruct for its own profit a little feudal France. Let it pull our chestnuts out of the fire and be hanged to it! For my part, it's this cheering spectacle that has put me into humor with politics again. So hurrah for M. Maréchal and his mates, gentlemen of the divine-right middle class! Let's cover these precious allies with honors and glory, till the day when our triumph sends them back to their lasts!

Baroness — But we have plenty of deputies off the same piece: why should we choose the least capable for our spokesman?

Marquis — Once more, it's not a question of capacity.

Baroness — You are a great patron of M. Maréchal's.

Marquis — What if I am? I look on him as a sort of retainer

of my family. His grandfather was farmer under mine; I am his daughter's guardian: those are ties.

Baroness — And you don't tell everything.

Marquis — I tell all I know.

Baroness — Then let me complete your information. Rumor has it that you were not insensible, once on a time, to the charms of the first Mme. Maréchal.

Marquis — You don't believe that silly story, I hope?

Baroness — Faith! You indemnify M. Maréchal so much —

Marquis — That I seem to have damnified him? Oh, good Heavens! who can feel safe from scandal? Nobody; — not even you, dear Baroness.

Baroness — I'd very much like to know what they can say about me.

Marquis — Silly stuff I certainly won't repeat to you.

Baroness — You believe it, of course?

Marquis — God forbid! The likelihood that your late husband married his mother's companion? It threw me into a rage!

Baroness — That was doing such trash too much honor.

Marquis — I answered smartly enough, I assure you.

Baroness — I don't doubt it.

Marquis — All the same, you are right in wanting to marry again.

Baroness — And who told you I want to?

Marquis — It's too bad! you don't treat me as a friend. I deserve your confidence all the more because I don't need it, knowing you as if I had made you. The alliance of a wizard is not to be disdained, Baroness.

Baroness [*seating herself near the table*] — Show your sorcery.

Marquis [*seating himself in front of her*] — Willingly! Give me your hand.

Baroness [*drawing off her glove*] — You'll give it back to me?

Marquis — And I'll help you place it, which is more. [*Examining the Baroness' hand.*] You are handsome, rich, and a widow.

Baroness — One would think herself at Mme. Lenormand's.

Marquis [*still inspecting the hand*] — With so many facilities, not to say temptations, to lead a brilliant and frivolous life, you have chosen to play a part almost austere, a part which demands irreproachable manners — and you have them.

Baroness — If it was a part, you will admit that it very much resembled a penance.

Marquis — Not for you.

Baroness — What do you know about it?

Marquis — I see it in your hand, faith! I see there even that the contrary would have cost you more, owing to the unalterable calm with which nature has endowed your heart.

Baroness [*withdrawing her hand*] — Say at once that I am a monster!

Marquis — All in good time! — The guileless take you for a saint; skeptics for one ambitious of power; I, Guy François Condorier, Marquis d'Auberive, take you simply for a shrewd Berlines, in process of erecting a throne in the midst of the Faubourg St. Germain. You already reign over men, but women resist you: your reputation offends them, and not knowing where to get at you to hurt, they intrench themselves behind that paltry rumor I just told you about. In a word, your veil is too small, and you are searching for one large enough to cover everything. "Paris is well worth a mass," said Henry the Fourth: that's your opinion too.

Baroness — They say we mustn't contradict sleep-walkers; nevertheless, permit me to observe to you that if I wanted a husband, with my fortune and my position in the world I could have found twenty already as easily as one.

Marquis — Twenty, yes; one, no. You forget that pestilent little rumor —

Baroness [*rising*] — None but fools believe that.

Marquis [*rising*] — There's just the *hic*. You are only courted by extremely clever men — too clever! and it's a fool you want.

Baroness — Because —?

Marquis — Because you don't intend to give yourself a master. You need a husband you can hang up in your drawing-room like a family portrait, nothing more.

Baroness — Have you finished, my dear diviner? There is no common-sense in all that stuff; but you have amused me, and I can't refuse you anything.

Marquis — Maréchal will have the speech?

Baroness — Or I'll lose my name.

Marquis — And you shall lose your name — I engage.

Baroness — You do anything you please with me.

Marquis — Ah, Baroness! how quickly I'd take you at your

word if I were only sixty! [DUBOIS *brings in a card on a silver salver*. MARQUIS, *taking the card, reads*.] "Count Hugues d'Outreville." [To DUBOIS.] Show him in, good Heavens! show him in — No! tell the Count I'll be with him in a moment. [DUBOIS *goes out*.

Baroness — I am in your way; but it serves you right! There was no need of sending back my carriage.

Marquis — Really, I should introduce this young man to you some day or other; so why not straight off?

Baroness — Who is he?

Marquis — My nearest relation — a poor relation. I have had him come to Paris so I can make his acquaintance before leaving him my fortune.

Baroness — Legitimate curiosity. How does it happen you don't know him?

Marquis — He lives in the County [Venaissin — "Egypt"]: a true feudal gentleman, and the last time I was there, in the lifetime of his good father, twenty years ago, Hugues was seven or eight.

Baroness — He has a fine name.

Marquis — And sports azure with three golden byzants. But don't go to dreaming — he's no husband for you: he lacks all the nullities of your ideal.

Baroness — You don't know him, you said.

Marquis — I know the race: it is violent and colossal. The father and the grandfather were six feet high, shoulders to match, and I recall that when I wanted to dance little Hugues on my knees I had a load of it. But you'll see the lad yourself. I must ask your indulgence for him somewhat; these country gentlemen are not always the pink of high breeding, you know, — big hunters, big eaters, big petticoat-chasers.

Baroness — How shocking!

Marquis — We'll lick him into shape. [Rings. To DUBOIS, *who enters*.] Show him in.

Dubois [announcing] — His Lordship the Count d'Outreville.

SCENE III.

Marquis [going to meet him with open arms] — Ha! come right here! [Stopping in stupefaction.] What, is this you, that big boy I jumped —

Count — The fact is, you must consider that I am grown up now, sir.

Marquis [*aside*] — Bean-pole! [*Aloud.*] Excuse my surprise, cousin: I have been used to putting your name on broader shoulders.

Count — Yes, my grandfather and my father were Goliaths: I take after my mother.

Marquis — Well, you are none the less welcome. Thank your stars that you've come to me just on the dot for being presented to the Baroness Pfeffers.

Count [*bowing*] — Her Ladyship is related, I presume, to the Baroness Sophie Pfeffers?

Baroness — That is myself, sir.

Count — What! that model of piety, of austerity, of —

Baroness — Thank you, sir!

Marquis — Why, yes, that model is neither old nor ugly, which surprises you.

Count — I confess — But *gratior pulchro in corpore virtus* [virtue is more pleasing in a beautiful body].

Baroness — Alas, sir, I deserve neither the one nor the other of your compliments.

Count [*abashed*] — Ah, madame, if I could have suspected you knew Latin —

Marquis — Then who did you suspect of knowing it here?

Count — Pardon me, madame, a wholly unmeant familiarity. [*To the MARQUIS.*] How happy M. de Saint-Agathe will be when he learns —

Marquis — And who might M. de Saint-Agathe be?

Count — Have you never heard M. de Saint-Agathe spoken of? You surprise me. M. de Saint-Agathe, nevertheless, is one of our leading lights. I have been so happy as to have him for a tutor, and he has remained my director in all things.

Marquis [*aside*] — This isn't a gentleman: it's a sexton.

Baroness [*aside*] — What simplicity!

Dubois [*entering*] — Her Ladyship the Baroness' carriage is here.

Baroness [*aside*] — Azure with three golden byzants! [*Aloud.*] I will escape, Marquis; I am too much exposed here to the sin of pride. Good-by, Count. Your cousin will honor me by bringing you to see me; but I warn you that flatteries must be left at my drawing-room door. Stay where you are, Marquis; invalids don't go to the doors with guests.

[*Goes out.*]

SCENE IV.

Count — Is that lady married?

Marquis — Yes, cousin, I have been very sick. Compose yourself : it isn't coming back.

Count — Awfully relieved! And what sickness have you had, pray?

Marquis — The Baroness is a widow. Thank you for the interest you display in her.

Count [*aside*] — He is an original.

Marquis [*aside*] — I don't fancy my heir. [*Aloud.*] Let's talk about our affairs. I have no children; you are my nearest relative, and my intention, as I wrote you, is to leave you all my property.

Count — And I promise to recognize your benefactions by making a use of them agreeable to God.

Marquis — You can make what use you please of them. But I affixed two conditions to what you call my benefactions; I hope neither of them is repugnant to you?

Count — The first being to add your name to mine, I regard it as a favor.

Marquis — Very good. And the second, to take a wife of my choosing. How does that strike you?

Count — As a filial duty.

Marquis — That is a strong word.

Count — It is but just, sir; for I can truly say that on the receipt of your adorable letter I vowed you all the feelings of a son.

Marquis — Quick as that? All at once? Bang!

Count — To such a degree that I no longer recognized my right to dispose of my hand without your permission, and did not hesitate to break off a very rich marriage which M. de Saint-Agathe had arranged for me in Avignon.

Marquis — Matters had not gone very far, I suppose?

Count — Only the first bann [*of two needed*] had been published.

Marquis — That all! And on what pretext did you break off?

Count — Oh, Gad! it wasn't a family entitled to much consideration — new rich. I have a horror of the middle classes.

Marquis — Hang it! how will you contrive? When I have just fixed on a middle-class wife for you!

Count — Ha, ha! Charming!

Marquis — She is very rich and very handsome, but of very plebeian family.

Count — Is this to be serious?

Marquis [*rising*] — So serious that I make this marriage a *sine qua non* of inheritance from me.

Count — Permit me to say to you, sir, that I do not comprehend what interest —

Marquis — Very simple: she is a girl I saw born, and for whom I cherish an affection like a father's. I want her children to inherit my name, that's all.

Count — At least she is an orphan?

Marquis — Of the mother only.

Count — Well, that is something. Mothers-in-law are the great stumbling-block of misalliances.

Marquis — I ought to let you know, however, that the father has married again, and that the second wife is entirely alive. But she is connected with the highest nobility [*aside*: by her pretensions], and signs "Aglaë Maréchal, née De la Vertpillière."¹

Count — And the father?

Marquis — Former ironmaster, industrial noble,² you know the sort; right-thinking [*i.e.*, pro-clerical], deputy of our party.

Count — He is called Maréchal, you say?

Marquis — Maréchal.

Count — Pretty short. Isn't there some territorial name to take, to correct the crudity of the misalliance?

Marquis — I've found something better than that. You would be proud to marry Cathelineau's³ daughter?

Count — To be sure! but what is the connection —

Marquis — Between a soldier and an orator? Words are swords, too. A week from now your father-in-law will be the Vendéan of the tribune.

Count — Pshaw!

Marquis — I have got our friends to concede that he shall be our spokesman in the session about to open. Mum! it's a secret yet.

¹ Maréchal (Farrier) is a typical middle-class name; De la Vertpillière (Bold Pillager), an invented type of aristocratic origin.

² Before the Revolution, nobles could engage in no industry but agriculture and mining.

³ Vendéan general in the royalist rising against the Revolution in 1793.

Count — Do not begin that way, Marquis! There is no longer a misalliance. The good cause ennobles its champions. And you say the girl is rich?

Marquis — She will bring you enough so you can wait patiently for my inheritance.

Count — May that never reach me! And she is handsome?

Marquis — She is simply the very handsomest person I know, my dear boy. [*Aside.*] I boast of it. [*Aloud.*] You will make her happy, won't you?

Count — I venture to promise that, sir. I comprehend all the duties which marriage imposes; my youth has been one long preparation for the sacred knot, and I can say that I shall present myself unspotted at the altar.

Marquis — Huh!

Count — Ask M. de Saint-Agathe, who knows my most secret actions and my most secret thoughts.

Marquis — My best compliments on it, but your innocence must be like Orestes', my dear boy — it must begin to weigh on you? I hope so, at least.

Count [*dropping his eyes*] — I confess it.

Marquis — Good enough!

Count — Might I venture to ask you if my future wife is brunette?

Marquis — Ah, ha! that interests you!

Count — It is permitted, it is even recommended, to seek in a bride some of those perishable traits which lend one grace the more to virtue. At least that is M. de Saint-Agathe's advice.

Marquis — That's right: it's a long while since we talked about him. By the way, cousin, does M. de Saint-Agathe see about your clothes, too?

Count — Why?

Marquis — Because you have the air of a dispenser of holy water. I can't present you in this deplorable costume: tell my valet to send you my tailor.

Dubois [*entering*] — M. Maréchal is here: must we let him in?

Marquis — I should think so! [*To the COUNT.*] Comes in the nick of time.

Count — Does he know your projects?

Marquis — Not yet, and I shall not open them to him for some days. [*Aside.*] A certain amount of work ought to go on in his mind first.

SCENE V.

Enter MARÉCHAL.

Maréchal — By George! you see before you an enraptured man. I came to inquire the news about you, — not without some uneasiness, I will confess to you now, — and I learn you're going out on horseback! Thunder! well, it's your affair, Marquis.

Marquis — Gout is like seasickness: when it's over, it's over. Permit me, my good friend, to introduce Count Hugues d'Outreville, my cousin.

Maréchal — Much honored, my Lord Count. You see before you the oldest friend of our dear Marquis. My grandfather was a farmer of his, and I don't blush for it; my family has won the land, his has lost it,¹ and we meet on the same footing, the one forgetting his superiority of birth, and the other —

Marquis — Of his fortune.

Maréchal — We personify the alliance of the old aristocracy and the new.

Count — You do yourself injustice, sir: you are wholly ours. You are so by the same title as Cathelineau.

Maréchal — Hey?

Count — From the illustrious soldier to the great orator is but a step. Words are swords, too. You are the Vendéan of the tribune.

Maréchal [*aside*] — Who's he hitting at?

Marquis — You will make fuller acquaintance another time, gentlemen. You are worth mutual comprehension. For the moment, my dear Count, don't forget that you have to hold a consultation with my tailor; that is an indispensable preliminary to Parisian life.

Count — Since you permit — [*To MARÉCHAL.*] I hope for the honor of seeing you again, sir.

Marquis [*showing him to the door*] — How does he strike you?

Count — He has a grand look, the look of genius.

Marquis — You're a fine judge. Good-bye.

SCENE VI.

Maréchal — Are you sure your cousin's in his right mind? Cathelineau! the Vendéan of the tribune!

¹ *I.e.*, in the Revolution confiscations; a highly tactful allusion.

Marquis — He is a chatterbox, who has spoiled me of the pleasure of breaking a great piece of news to you. But first, my dear *Maréchal*, are you quite sure of the solidity of your conversion? You don't feel the least liberal virus in your heart any longer?

Maréchal — The suspicion outrages me.

Marquis — Have you completely renounced Voltaire and his pomps?

Maréchal — Don't speak to me about that monster! It's he and his friend Rousseau that have ruined everything. So long as the doctrines of those scoundrels are not dead and buried, there will be nothing sacred, there will be no means of enjoying one's fortune in peace. There must be a religion for the people, *Marquis*.

Marquis [*aside*] — As he doesn't belong to them any more.

Maréchal — I'll go further: there ought to be the same one for us too. We must frankly return to the religion of our fathers.

Marquis [*aside*] — *His* fathers! — fattened on confiscated estates!

Maréchal — We can't make an end of the Revolution except by destroying the University, that den of free-thinking; that's my opinion.

Marquis — Well, my friend, be of good cheer: operations against the University are going to begin this very session.

Maréchal — You fill me with joy!

Marquis [*putting his hand on MARÉCHAL'S shoulder*] — Don't you think that in this memorable campaign the voice of our spokesman will find an echo, and that he may be styled The Vendéan of the Tribune?

Maréchal — What! *Marquis* —

Marquis — Yes, my friend, it is you we have thought of to play this magnificent part.

Maréchal — Is it possible? But it is immortality you are offering me!

Marquis — Something like that.

Maréchal — From the height of the tribune to dominate the Assembly with voice and gesture, to carry one's thought to the ends of the earth on the wings of Renown! — But, hang it all! do you believe I am fit for a speaker?

Marquis — Why, I was just in the mood of admiring your eloquence.

Maréchal — In private circles, it's well enough. But in public I should never dare.

Marquis — All habit! the best way of learning to swim is to plunge into the water.

Maréchal — Only this is no splashing-around business.

Marquis — We'll tie corks under your arms. Your first speech is a sort of manifesto: we'll give it to you all written, so you'll only have to read it.

Maréchal — Good enough! From the moment nothing is needed but courage and conviction — It won't be known in public that the speech isn't mine?

Marquis — Not unless by indiscretion on your part.

Maréchal — You don't suppose me capable of that, I hope. — And when will the manuscript be put in my hands?

Marquis — In a few days.

Maréchal — I shan't sleep from now till then. I will confess my weakness to you: I love glory.

Marquis — It is the passion of great souls.

Maréchal — Am I quite one of your side now?

Marquis — Quite.

Maréchal — Then let me call you Condorier, as you call me Maréchal. It is a bit of childishness, if you choose —

Marquis — Oh, well, do it. You will give me my title when you have one of your own.

Maréchal — Ah! that's what I understand equality to mean: this is the fine, the true sort.

Dubois [*entering*] — A pretty seedy fellow is here claiming that his Lordship the Marquis has made an appointment with him.

Marquis — In a minute. [*To MARÉCHAL.*] I am sorry to send you away, my dear fellow, but important business has just come up.

Maréchal — Why so many ceremonies among people of our standing? So long, Condorier, so long! [*Goes out.*]

Marquis [*to DUBOIS*] — Have him come in now. [*Alone.*] Ass! And to think I've got to make him a baron yet! [*Smiling.*] That man will never know all I've done for him.

SCENE VII.

Dubois [*announcing*] — M. Giboyer!

Marquis — Ah, good morning, M. Giboyer!

Giboyer — My Lord Marquis, I am yours [*i.e.*, your client, not your “sieur”].

Marquis — Mine? Oh! Yes! — Pardon me, I had lost for a moment the key to your picturesque locutions. I heard through your — What do you call Maximilien? your pupil?

Giboyer — The word is too high-flying: a tutor is an article of luxury the lower classes have little use for. Say that I am his uncle on the European plan.

Marquis — Call him your adopted son. — I heard through your adopted son, then, that you were coming to spend a week in Paris, and was seized with a great desire to see you.

Giboyer — You are very good, your Lordship. Your desire only preceded mine. — You may be sure I should not have gone through Paris without knocking at your door — I am not an ingrate.

Marquis — Don't let's talk of that. — Do you know you have not changed since we lost sight of each other? How are you getting on?

Giboyer — It would seem that my father, foreseeing the inclemencies of my existence, must have built me of lime and sand. But yourself — it seems to me you take on years without advancing in age.

Marquis [*at right*] — Oh! as for me, I advanced so fast that I haven't budged an inch for twenty years. [*Seating himself near the table.*] But let's talk about you, my comrade. How have you come out? Have you got a serious position at last?

Giboyer [*seating himself also*] — Yes, extremely serious: one of the hands in the funeral corporation at Lyons.

Marquis — In the funeral corporation?

Giboyer — Daytimes; evenings, ticket-taker at the Celestins' Theatre. I won't spread myself on so philosophic a contrast.

Marquis — Thanks for that. And what is your position in the obsequies?

Giboyer — Arranger. I am the one who tells the guests, with an agreeable smile, “Gentlemen, whenever it may give you pleasure —”

Marquis — Pardon me for astonishment that with your talent, you have not been able to pull your jackstraws out of the heap better.

Giboyer — You talk at your ease about it. The management of jackstraws demands a delicacy of touch incompatible

with the burdens I have always carried on my shoulders: my father first, Maximilien next.

Marquis — Then why the deuce do you amuse yourself rescuing orphans?

Giboyer — What would you have? The Montyon prize [for magnanimity] wouldn't let me sleep.¹ [*Rising.*] Allow me, won't you? I can't stay in one place. — And then later I had a good situation on Vernouillet's paper; I had my foot on the ladder at last: but, thud! the horse dropped dead under me and I fell in the street again, just as payment fell due for the little man's second quarter in college. I had to find a place to-day or to-morrow; I was offered the editorship of the *Radical*, and took it. You know what the "editor" of a paper was then [under the censorship]: its scapegoat, its man of penalties. Funny profession, wasn't it? but it paid well: four thousand francs, boarded and lodged at government charge eight months out of twelve. I saved money. Unluckily '48 came, and the prison career was closed for me.

Marquis — Didn't you offer your services to the Republic?

Giboyer — It refused them.

Marquis — The prude!

Giboyer — I was in despair; not for myself, — I have never found any trouble in earning my salt, — but for the child whose education I should have to break off. It was then that I thought of you and came to find you.

Marquis — Do you remember the time you cursed the cruel boon of education? Who would have said then that one day you would ask me to help you glue this Nessus'-shirt on a poor child's back?

Giboyer — I confess that before sending him to college I had more than one confab with my pillow. My own example wasn't encouraging! But the situations had only an apparent analogy: it needs more than one generation for a family of porters to make a breach into society! All assaults resemble each other: the first assailants remain in the ditch and make a hurdle of their bodies for those who follow. I was the sacrificed generation: it would really have been too stupid to have the sacrifice profit nobody.

Marquis — On my part, I was happy to endow my fatherland with one socialist more. But to come back to you, you had

¹ An allusion to Plutarch's story that Themistocles said "Miltiades' trophy would not let him sleep."

nothing more on your shoulders then; that was the time to draw out your jackstraws.

Giboyer — That's what I told myself; but you shall see my run of bad luck! The press gave me only a starvation diet, thanks to the vast crop of journals; then I struck the idea of writing a series of contemporary biographies.

Marquis — I read some of them: they were very spicy.

Giboyer — Too spicy! Didn't I take my stage part of Chief Justice in dead earnest? Fool! I wrote with the sharp end of my pen: duels, lawsuits, fines — all sorts of earthquake! My editor got scared and suspended publication; and when I wanted to reënter journalism, I found all doors barred by the powerful enmities my little Popedom had created. Nevertheless, Maximilien was about to leave college; I wanted to perfect a *sterling* education for him. There was no time to squirm or make wry faces inside: I put on dirty clothes and jumped in.

Marquis — Jumped in! What do you mean by that?

Giboyer — You don't know, you upper set, any professions, but those on the surface of the water; but down at the bottom fifty slimy industries you have no suspicion of nose around in the mud. If I told you I had kept an intelligence office! That isn't particularly nutritious; but I've got the stomach of an ostrich, thank God! I have eaten my finger-ends on good days, dirt on bad ones, and Maximilien is a Litt. D., Ph. D., LL.D.! He has traveled like the scion of a great family! he has honors. — As if all that cost nothing!

Marquis — You take a singular interest in that lad.

Giboyer — He is my one relative, and then one is liable to take up a hobby as he grows old: mine is to make Maximilien what I could not be myself, an honorable and honored man. It pleases me to be a dunghill and fertilize a lily. That fad is as well worth while as a snuff-box collector's.

Marquis — I think so too. But why haven't you acknowledged this son you adore?

Giboyer — What son?

Marquis [*rising*] — Foxy! I know your history as well as you do. You had Maximilien in 1837, by a newspaper folder named Adèle Gérard. Am I rightly informed?

Giboyer — Yes, Mr. President.

Marquis — You lost sight of mother and child nimbly enough up to November, 1845, the date when the poor girl died.

Giboyer — How did you find out —

Marquis — We have our police, my dear fellow. Adèle Gérard wrote you a despairing letter in which she bequeathed you Maximilien; you hurried to her death-bed, and wanted to legitimize the child by a marriage *in extremis*, but the mother gave up the ghost before the sacrament; and then, by a freak I wish you would explain to me, you saddled yourself with the orphan without being willing to acknowledge him. Why was that?

Giboyer — Your Lordship, I have written a book which is the digest of all my experience and all my ideas. I believe it fine and true, I am proud of it, it reconciles me with myself; and for all that, I won't publish it under my name, for fear my name might harm it.

Marquis — That seems prudent, to be sure.

Giboyer — Well, if I don't sign my book, why should you expect me to sign my boy? I congratulate myself every day that death left me no time to fasten on him the ball-and-chain of his parentage.

Marquis — At least he knows you are his father?

Giboyer — What good would it do? If he didn't keep the secret, it would injure him; and if he did keep it I should be deeply wounded. Besides, why put in his mind that cause of timidity or effrontery? What should I gain by it? Don't you believe that at any given moment he would find it harder to forgive me my vices if he had to blush for them as for a taint in himself?

Marquis — Do you know, my brave fellow, you have been worked up to great delicacies of feeling since I saw you?

Giboyer [*dryly*] — You'll be worked up as high when you are a father.

Marquis — Look out, Master Giboyer, you are forgetting yourself!

Giboyer — I am retaliating, that's all, your Lordship. Now let's come to the point; for I don't suppose you have given yourself up to this long investigation out of pure curiosity.

Marquis — And pray what do you suppose?

Giboyer — That before offering me a confidential position, you wanted to make sure if my secret was a sufficient guaranty. Is it sufficient?

Marquis — Yes.

Giboyer — Then talk ahead.

Marquis [*seating himself*] — How much do your two trades bring you in?



Giboyer — Eighteen hundred francs, each washing the other's hands ; but don't take that figure for the basis of your offers. You forgot to ask me what I'm in Paris to do. Now, I'm here to make arrangements with an American society that's starting a paper in the United States, and offers me twelve thousand francs to conduct it. Everybody hasn't forgotten me.

Marquis — I am a proof of that. Then you understand English ?

Giboyer — I invented the Boyerson method.

Marquis — And you will consent to expatriate yourself ?

Giboyer — For certain ; unless you offer me the same advantages, in which case I'll give you the preference.

Marquis — But you would make some sacrifice to remain near Maximilien ?

Giboyer — That would be a sacrifice at his expense ; for if I go out there, at the end of six years I can bring him back three thousand francs yearly income, — that is to say, independence.

Marquis — And if we, my friends and I, charge ourselves with pushing him ? I am always interested in him. I have already put him into M. Maréchal's as secretary.

Giboyer — Fine advancement !

Marquis — Hm ! ha ! 'There's a good lady there, still fresh, who interests herself in young people and places them extremely well. Maximilien's predecessors all have good situations.

Giboyer — Many thanks ! The place I destine for him is not in your ranks, and there's no one but myself that can give it to him.

Marquis — What place ? and in what ranks ?

Giboyer — My examination is finished, my Lord Marquis.

Marquis [*rising*] — Wait a minute. So it's he that is to sign your book ? Splendid ! You thus transfuse into his life the quintessence of your own ; you leave yourself as a legacy. Bravo, my man ! you practice paternity pelican fashion.

Giboyer — You wander from the question, my Lord Marquis : let's come back there, please. This is my ultimatum : I want the same terms as Déodat.

Marquis — And who told you —

Giboyer — You don't expect to put me in your police, do you ? That is worked by bigger men than I am. Then what service can I be to you, if not to replace your virtuoso ? You thought shamefacedness wouldn't stop me, and you were right : my conscience has no right to play prude. But if you expected

to get me for a crust of bread, you were mistaken. You need me worse than I do you.

Marquis — Ho ! ho ! There's conceit for you.

Giboyer — No, my Lord Marquis. You can perhaps find a literary scamp as capable as I am of emptying a poisoned ink bottle on whoever comes along ; but the inconvenience of those auxiliaries is, that you are never sure of keeping them. Now, me you can hold on to. That is what puts me in shape to make conditions.

Marquis — That double-ended reasoning strikes me as unanswerable. Déodat had a thousand francs a month : the committee wanted to effect a reduction under that head, but I will lay stress on your reasons.

Giboyer — Perhaps it wouldn't want to decide except on sample. Suppose I broach a bottle of Déodat for you here this evening ?

Marquis — Are you sufficiently master of his style ?

Giboyer — Oh, gracious — to make shift at a definition, it consists in *doubling up* the freethinker, *knocking out* the philosopher,¹ and, in a word, preceding the ark with cane and billy.² A mixture of Bourdaloue and Turlupin³ applied to the defense of holy things ; the Dies Iræ on the *mirliton*.⁴

Marquis — Bravo ! Turn those claws against our adversaries, and it will be all right. But tell me, do you feel in condition to write a parliamentary speech ?

Giboyer — Yes indeed ! I keep eloquence in stock too ; but that comes extra.

Marquis — A bargain. And what pseudonym will you take ? for you couldn't be of any service to us under your own name.

Giboyer — That's clear ; and it suits me in every way. The boy won't know it's I ; and besides, I've squeezed out all the juice of the old Giboyer into his glass — let's pass on to another. Besides, I've had enough of that poor devil nothing succeeds with, who has found no means of being a literary man with his talent or an honest man with his virtues. — On with a new skin ! and hurrah for M. Boyergi !

¹ *I.e.*, in France, materialist.

² As corporal and policeman.

³ Famous low comedian.

⁴ A squeaking reed pipe, on which vulgar songs and jokes and doggerel verse — like our comic valentines, and known as "*mirliton* poetry" — are nasally chanted.

Marquis — Your anagram — capital ! — I will introduce you to your bankers to-morrow evening. [*Giving him a bank bill.*] This is for your first expenses ; so that I shan't know you when you come back !

Giboyer — Leave that to me : I was assistant manager in the Marseilles Theatre.

Marquis — Till to-morrow ! [*GIBOYER goes out.*] Ugh ! what a day !

Dubois [*entering*] — His Lordship's horse is saddled.

Marquis — All right ! [*Taking his hat and gloves.*] Queer scamp ! It's the prostitute earning her daughter's dowry.

ACT II.

Scene : A small drawing-room at M. MARÉCHAL'S. Two doors in flats. Fireplace in rear. Tapestry frame at right.

SCENE I.

MME. MARÉCHAL, *seated embroidering* ; MAXIMILIEN, *seated near her on a cushioned stool, reading to her.*

Maximilien [*reads*] —

“ I wept my tears out, there with God alone :
Then longed, ere death enchained me for its own,
To cast my eyes on those dear spots of yore,
So full of mournful charms ; and o'er and o'er
Throughout the eve looked on them all once more.
Oh ! how few seasons' — ”¹

Mme. Maréchal — I am afraid you are getting tired, M. Maximilien.

Maximilien — No, madame.

Mme. Maréchal — You must think I take a rather unfair advantage of you.

Maximilien — I am too happy that my services as reader can fill the gap of my services as secretary. I have done no work with my two hands since I came to M. Maréchal's.

Mme. Maréchal — You read like an angel.

Maximilien — You are indulgent.

Mme. Maréchal — The way you read verses, one feels that you love them. As for me, I adore them. You write them, perhaps ?

¹ From Lamartine's "Jocelyn."

Maximilien — I have written some bad enough not to tempt me to begin over again.

Mme. Maréchal — It seems to me that if I had been a man, I should have been a poet — a poet or a soldier. Women are much to be commiserated, so they are! Action is forbidden them, and they are not allowed even to embody their reveries.

Maximilien — Poor women! [*Aside.*] What surprises me is, that you still find any of that. [*Aloud.*] Do you wish me to go on?

Mme. Maréchal — If it doesn't tire you to read. I should never be tired of listening myself. That music is so beautiful!

Maximilien [*reads*] —

“Oh! how few seasons' flowers and frost and gale
Had blotted all our traces from the vale!
How in those paths, familiar to our tread,
Earth soon forgot us like its silent dead!”

Mme. Maréchal — You were very young when you lost your mother.

Maximilien — I was eight. [*Reading*] —

“The vegetation, like a sea of green,”

Mme. Maréchal — And you never knew your father?

Maximilien — Never. [*Reads*] —

“With billowy creepers overspread the scene.
Bindweed and brier —”

Mme. Maréchal — Poor boy. Alone in the world at eight! How much courage you needed!

Maximilien — None, madame. No one has had an easier life than mine, thanks to the divinely good man who rescued me!

Mme. Maréchal — He is a relative of yours, I believe?

Maximilien — Cousin in the tenth or eleventh degree; but his benefactions have drawn the relationship so much closer that in calling him uncle I wrong him by one grade. He had no children, and, so to speak, adopted me.

Mme. Maréchal — Ah! I understand that, I who have no longer a child! I should be a happy woman if I could find some one to be a mother to.

Maximilien — But it seems to me you are every way led — Your stepdaughter?

Mme. Maréchal — Fernande? Yes — But it is a son I should wish. A son's love must be tenderer. Poor Fernande! I cannot feel harshly toward her: her coldness to me is her fidelity to a tomb.

Maximilien — I believe she lost her mother in the cradle.

Mme. Maréchal — Oh, not at all! She was three, and with us women sensibility is so precocious.

Maximilien — Mlle. Fernande must have worn out hers in the bud.

Mme. Maréchal — Doesn't she seem very expansive to you?

Maximilien — No — no indeed!

Mme. Maréchal — Dear me! she is a little barbarian, who has been reared all alone. Perhaps she is rather proud, but how could it be otherwise in her position as a rich heiress?

Maximilien — Permit me, madame: there is no need of being rich to be proud, and it is a virtue; but it is not pride Mlle. Fernande has, it is superciliousness.

Mme. Maréchal — Have you any complaint for yourself —

Maximilien — Complaint for myself, no, because it is absolutely all the same to me; but frankly, Mlle. Fernande displays an ostentation of indifference to me that is quite useless. I keep myself in my place, and have not the least desire to get myself put back there. She is wasting her frost.

Mme. Maréchal — It may be in your interest; she may be afraid —

Maximilien — Of what?

Mme. Maréchal — You are young, she is handsome —

Maximilien — And she has read novels where the poor secretary falls in love with the baron's daughter? She can reassure herself, I am running no danger. There is a river of ice between us.

Mme. Maréchal — And that river is —

Maximilien — Her dowry! which she would be sure to think me in love with. Rich girls — brrr! The rustling of their gowns seems like the crumpling of bank bills; and I read only one thing in their beautiful eyes, — "The law punishes the counterfeiter."

Mme. Maréchal — I love to see you have those ideas; I have judged you rightly. It must be said, alas! that firmness of sentiment is only in men reared in the school of adversity.

Maximilien — Not at all, madame! that is the only master I have lacked, thanks to my dear protector.

Mme. Maréchal — Do not blush at having known misery, M. Maximilien ; not before me, at least.

Maximilien — Neither before you, madame, nor before anybody. But truly, if I did know it, it was at the age when one doesn't comprehend it, and I no longer remember it. Nothing of my infancy remains to me except a disagreeable impression, that of cold ; and yet when I saw the warts on all my little playmates' hands, I should have been ashamed not to have some — [*smiling*] — I did have some.

Mme. Maréchal — It is very becoming to a man to jest about his experiences : light-heartedness is the most virile form of courage.

Maximilien [*aside*] — The good lady sticks there.

Mme. Maréchal — If I had a son, I should wish him smiling in his strength like, like you — and I should beg you to be his friend — his Mentor rather, for he would still be very young.

Maximilien [*aside*] — She must have been married late.

Mme. Maréchal — Love me a little, M. Maximilien.

Maximilien — Certainly, madame —

SCENE II.

FERNANDE opens the door, and makes a motion to withdraw.

Mme. Maréchal — Come in, dear, you're not in the way. M. Maximilien is so kind as to do some reading to me. If the beautiful verses don't scare you away, take your work and listen.

Fernande — With pleasure, madame.

[*Brings forth her tapestry frame and installs herself.*]

Maximilien [*aside, indicating Mme. MARÉCHAL*] — How she looks at me ! Is it just accident ? — Oh, for shame !

Mme. Maréchal [*going over to FERNANDE*] — That square is very pretty : take care and not lose it, as you did the last one.

Fernande [*at her work*] — I shall doubtless find it again.

Mme. Maréchal — Some day when nobody needs it, I suppose ?

Fernande — Probably.

Mme. Maréchal — You can't get it out of my head that you lost it so as not to show it to Mme. Mathéus.

Fernande — Why shouldn't I have shown it ?

Mme. Maréchal — Because there were three defects in it, I think.

Fernande — What were you reading ?

Mme. Maréchal — “Jocelyn.” Will you resume, M. Maximilien ?

Maximilien [aside] — She has a queer way of looking at people. [*Reads*] —

“Bindweed and brier hampered every pace;
The grass I trod upon knew not my face;
The lake where fallen leaves had found a grave,
Now flung them back from all its leaden wave.
Naught was reflected —”

Mme. Maréchal [to FERNANDE] — What are you looking for ? I can't listen when people are moving things around me.

Fernande — I can't find my blue ball.

Mme. Maréchal — You lose everything.

Maximilien [rising] — Will you permit me, mademoiselle ?

Fernande [dryly] — Don't disturb yourself, sir : I have it.

Maximilien [picking up the ball — aside] — Have you ! So have I. [*Puts it on the mantel.*] Miss Stuck-up !

SCENE III.

Enter MARÉCHAL, manuscript in hand.

Maréchal — Ah ! I was looking for you, M. Gérard. Good morning, Fernande. [*She holds out her forehead to him without quitting her work ; he kisses her.*] Here's your stent, my young friend:

Maximilien — All the better, sir. I was complaining of my uselessness.

Maréchal — From now on you won't lie idle any more, so be easy.

Fernande — What is it ?

Maréchal — What is it ? Haven't you noticed for three days that I had a gloomy and preoccupied air ?

Fernande — No.

Maréchal — That surprises me ! I thought I had — and one might have had it for less. I've just written a speech that will be a thunderbolt.

Fernande [rising and going to her father] — A speech ? You are going to speak ?

Maréchal — I've got to.

Fernande — Ah, father, speech is silver, but silence is golden.

Maréchal — There are circumstances, my girl, there are positions, when silence is a defection, and not to speak is complicity. Isn't that so, Aglaë?

Mme. Maréchal — Of course. [*To FERNANDE.*] Your father owes pledges to his party, his distinguished friendships, and, I say it boldly, to his alliance with a De la Vertpillière.

Fernande — Is it you, madame, who are urging him on?

Mme. Maréchal — Are you vexed at seeing him emerge from his obscurity?

Fernande — Alas! His tranquil life has not kept my vanity on the rack; his name without distinction has been enough for me, me, who loved him. [*To MARÉCHAL.*] What ambition is seizing you? I shall be worried to death the day you mount that dreadful tribune.

Maréchal — It isn't ambition, girlie, it's duty! Don't try to shake me: it will be in vain. Honor speaks and it must be heard. [*FERNANDE returns to her tapestry.*] My dear Gérard, do me the kindness of copying over my scrawls in your handsomer hand, for I can't make out my meaning there myself.

Fernande — Oh, you'll read it?

Maximilien — I will set about the work at once.

Maréchal — Run over it a little first, to see if you can decipher it. [*To FERNANDE.*] Yes, I shall read it: that doesn't make you so uneasy, hey? distrustful little thing! I shall read my first speech: as for the second, we'll see. [*Tapping her playfully on the check.*] So we take our father for an old duffer, do we?

[*FERNANDE kisses his hand; MAXIMILIEN sits in a corner and runs over the manuscript.*]

Servant [*announces*] — Her Ladyship the Baroness Pfeffers!

SCENE IV.

Enter the BARONESS, with a piece of tapestry rolled up in her muff.

Mme. Maréchal — Ah, Baroness!

Baroness — This is not your day, madame, but I did not wish to pass your door without knocking, though I still hope to see you enter mine to-morrow evening.

Maréchal — We'll go, if we have to go on our heads!

Baroness — Are you coming on well, Mr. Orator?

Maréchal — Ready for the combat, madame.

Baroness — Ho for the triumph ! [*To Mme. MARÉCHAL.*] I have also a little service to ask of you, madame.

Mme. Maréchal — I regret that it should be little.

Baroness — We are both patronesses of the Chinese Children's Mission ; I have sold all my tickets and am asked for more. Could you let me have a dozen of yours ?

Maréchal — They don't fight so much over hers as yours, dear Baroness.

Mme. Maréchal [*aside*] — Brute ! [*Aloud.*] I will see what I have left.

Baroness — Is it going to put you out ? You can send them to me.

Mme. Maréchal — No, I prefer to give them to you at once, it is safer : they might be stolen.

Maréchal [*low*] — You've got them all yet.

Mme. Maréchal [*same*] — You never say anything without putting your foot in it. [*Goes out.*]

Baroness [*approaching FERNANDE'S frame*] — Ah, you are one of the Altar Society, too, mademoiselle ?

Fernande — No, madame.

Baroness — What ? isn't what you are making there a square for a kneeling rug ?

Fernande — It is anything you like.

Baroness — But it's the regulation pattern — look.

[*Unrolls the tapestry she has in her muff.*]

Fernande [*aside*] — Oh dear !

Maréchal — Is that your work ? Oh, charming !

Fernande — It is very pretty. That must have cost — a great deal of time, didn't it ?

Baroness — Oh my, no !

Mme. Maréchal [*returning*] — I've only nine left : here they are.

Maréchal [*showing her the BARONESS' tapestry*] — Look at this, dear.

Mme. Maréchal [*to FERNANDE*] — Oh, you found it again ?

Maréchal — What are you saying ?

Mme. Maréchal — Why, yes indeed, that's the square Fernande thought she had lost.

Maréchal — You're dreaming, my dear.

Mme. Maréchal — It is quite recognizable — here are the three poor spots. Isn't it, Fernande ?

Fernande — I must say it is true.

Baroness [aside] — Ow !

Maximilien [aside] — Good !

Maréchal [aside] — Thunder ! what a slip-up that was !

Baroness [threatening FERNANDE with her finger] — Ah, little mischief, you recognized your own work, and you were laughing at me, asking me if it had cost much time !

Fernande — I wished to make you confess that your good works left you no time for knitting-work.

Maréchal [aside] — That child has wit when it's needed.

Mme. Maréchal — Let me into the secret, please.

Baroness — What society woman makes her tapestry herself and wears only her own hair ? Those are little deceits so general and so well understood, that when our switch comes off before our friends we put it on again with a laugh [*rolls up her square*], and that's what I'm doing.

Maréchal [aside] — Charming ! adorable ! No one has more grace !

Baroness — What surprises me in this accident is not that my tapestry shouldn't be my work, for I bought it : it's that it should be yours, mademoiselle.

Maréchal — Yes, that's a fact : how could it be sold to you ?

Mme. Maréchal [to FERNANDE] — I have always suspected the honesty of your chambermaid.

Fernande — Poor Jeannette ! she is incapable —

Mme. Maréchal — It isn't the first time your little pieces of work have got lost : probably she is making merchandise of them.

Baroness — And that the poor old woman we buy them of is a "fence." One more fraud on charity !

Maréchal — This is very serious. Have Jeannette come here till I question her.

Fernande — No, father : I will explain the great mystery to you later.

Mme. Maréchal — Why not at once ?

Maréchal — Have Jeannette come here.

Fernande [very red] — Well ! since I am compelled, it was I that gave those trifles to old Ma'am Hardouin.

Maximilien [aside] — Come, come !

Mme. Maréchal — It isn't worth blushing for as you are doing.

Baroness — Besides, madame, why force her to reveal her beautiful soul ?

Fernande — These things are ridiculous when they are not secret.

Mme. Maréchal — This is romantic charity.

Maréchal — Haven't you enough money for charity?

Fernande [*impatiently, with tears in her eyes*] — It isn't all the poor that will take charity. That old woman is proud; she is used to living by her needle, her eyesight is failing, and I come to the aid of her eyes, that's all. There is nothing romantic about it, and truly I don't understand why I should be tormented for so little a thing.

Maréchal — Come, quiet down: there's no great harm done.

Maximilien [*in a low voice*] — I believe it.

Maréchal [*to MAXIMILIEN*] — Do you like it?

Maximilien — I can read it perfectly; I am going to begin work on it. [*Goes out.*]

Baroness — Is that your secretary? He is distinguished looking. Good-by, dear madame; I leave you in great mortification over the little annoyance I have been the cause of for Mlle. Fernande. I am going to carry my brand of discord to St. Thomas Aquinas'; and rest easy, mademoiselle, I will not reveal your part in the collaboration.

Servant [*announces*] — His Lordship the Count d'Outreville!

SCENE V.

Enter the COUNT; BARONESS leaning against the fireplace.

Maréchal — Good morning, my Lord Count.

Count [*without seeing the BARONESS*] — How are the ladies? Their faces answer for them. My cousin made an appointment for me here —

Maréchal — Condorier?

Count — But I see that in my eagerness I have anticipated the time.

Mme. Maréchal — You are too gracious, Lord Count.

Baroness — Good-bye, dear madame.

Count — Oh, pardon, Baroness! I did not perceive you.

Baroness — I thought you did not recognize me.

Count [*approaching the fireplace*] — Could you believe that after having seen you once —

Baroness — I can believe it all the more, because at St. Thomas Aquinas' you were not twenty chairs from me and didn't bow to me.

Count — If I could have supposed you would do me the honor to recognize me —

Baroness — Oh ! the honors I can do you hardly touch you. I have done you that of inviting you to my house, and you haven't appeared there. Do I frighten you ?

Count — Oh no !

Baroness — Well ! try to earn your pardon.

Servant [announces] — His Lordship the Marquis d'Auberive !

SCENE VI.

Enter the MARQUIS.

Baroness [to the MARQUIS] — I am saved by a scratch : I was going to heap reproaches on you, Marquis.

Marquis — And why so, lovely being ?

Baroness — Your cousin will tell you. To-morrow, will you not, dear madame ? and you too, dear young lady. [Goes out.]

Count [aside] — She recognized me !

Maréchal — What grace ! what ease ! She is in her own house everywhere.

Fernande — Yes, it is we who seemed to be making the call.

Marquis — What I admire in her above all is tact. She understood that I have to talk serious business to you, and raised the siege. My dear Fernande, go and see if she has gone for good.

Fernande — “ And don't come back to tell us.”

Marquis [smiling] — There isn't any need of it, really.

SCENE VII.

Mme. Maréchal — Am I in the way too ?

Marquis — On the contrary, I count on you to help plead my cause. But let's sit down. [They seat themselves.] Madame, you have never shared our friend Maréchal's repugnance to marrying Fernande to a gentleman.

Mme. Maréchal — I have not the same motives as he to dread an aristocratic alliance : for me it is not quitting my sphere, it is reëntering it.

Maréchal — Heavens, my good friend ! that repugnance you speak of wasn't an actual repugnance, it was rather — what shall I say ? a possibly exaggerated modesty.

Marquis — I should have understood that up to a certain point, a week ago : but to-day there is not a gentleman who

does not consider your alliance an honor to him; and the proof is that I have come to ask the hand of my ward for the Count d'Outreville, here present, the sole heir of my property and my name.

Maréchal — Is it possible? What, my Lord Marquis! you would consent —

Mme. Maréchal [*low to her husband*] — Dignity, please! [*Aloud.*] We are deeply touched, Marquis, by the request you choose to make of us, but we ought before all to consult our dear Fernande's heart.

Maréchal — Ah, that's true.

Marquis — Nothing more just, madame; but could it not be consulted at once? Would you see any inconvenience in my cousin's pleading his own cause with Fernande?

Maréchal — None at all, Marquis, none at all.

Mme. Maréchal [*low*] — You throw yourself at his head.

Marquis — And you, madame?

Mme. Maréchal — I think all this is very irregular.

Marquis — I know it; but cannot etiquette have a little compassion on a young man's impatience? [*Low, to the COUNT.*] Say something yourself!

Count [*coldly*] — I beg you, madame.

Mme. Maréchal — As everybody wishes it —

Maréchal — That's it! Send for Fernande, my dear. [*Low.*] And prepare her a little.

Mme. Maréchal — Once more, this is all very quick work. Well! I yield. [*Goes out.*]

SCENE VIII.

Maréchal — Now my wife's out of the way, let me tell you without ceremony, my dear Marquis, how happy and proud I am of your alliance!

Count — It is for me alone, sir, to congratulate myself on it.

Maréchal — I hadn't intended to give but eight hundred thousand francs to my daughter, but now I'll give her a round million.

Count — Pray, sir, do not let us talk of these meannesses.

Marquis — On the contrary, just let's talk of them! My cousin has at present only twelve thousand francs income, but I have seventy I shall leave him — as late as possible.

Maréchal — Thunder! I've got a hundred more to offer him the day of my funeral.

Marquis — My grand — your grandchildren, I meant to say — will be in easy circumstances.

Maréchal — Why take it back, my dear Condorier? Say *our* grandchildren! They'll bear your name, won't they? Why, begad, Marquis! here we are relations — allied, anyway — through the women.

Marquis [*thoughtlessly*] — We were already — er — by our opinions.

Maréchal — But what are they amusing themselves at, out there? I'll bet Mme. Maréchal's making us wait just for dignity.

Marquis — Go and hunt them up: I will rejoin you.

Maréchal — I'm going to. [*Looking back at the COUNT from the doorway.*] How handsome he is!

SCENE IX.

Marquis — See here, my dear fellow, you're going to the altar like a whipped dog. I don't want you to be unhappy! If your bride displeases you, you ought to say so.

Count — It isn't that she displeases me, but —

Marquis — Say it, say it, don't incommode yourself! I'm in no straits for an heir. *Uno avulso non deficit alter*,¹ to speak your own tongue. I'll fall back on another branch — that of Valtravers. I am on bad terms with them; but reconciliation will be easy — *Aureus*, by Gad!²

Count — Cousin, in heaven's name, do not become excited!

Marquis — I am not becoming excited, sir, I am putting you at your ease. It is clear this marriage doesn't inspire you with enthusiasm.

Count — Why, yes, cousin, it inspires me with it.

Marquis — Oh, you don't find Fernande well enough made. Then do as well for yourself!

Count — But suppose I should have the ill fortune to displease her, in spite of my good will!

Marquis — I should be sorry for you; but I'll call up a Valtravers. You are prejudiced.

Count — Good gracious, what a situation!

[*FERNANDE appears at the door, left.*]

Marquis [*low*] — Here she is! I'll leave you.

¹ Virgil, misquoted: "One overturned, another will be lacking."

² Same quotation.

Count [*same*] — I don't know how to begin.

Marquis [*same*] — Very difficult, isn't it! "Mademoiselle, I have the consent of your parents, but I do not wish to hold you except of your own will." [*To FERNANDE.*] You expected to find your stepmother here, my child; but she has deserted you as well as your father, and I'm going to ask them the reason. [*Goes out.*]

SCENE X.

Count [*aside*] — Her head is handsome; but what a difference from the divine Pfeffers! And if she refuses me, I am ruined! [*Aloud.*] Mademoiselle, have you been told with what object —

Fernande — Yes, sir.

Count — I have the consent of your parents, but I do not wish to hold you except of your own will. That, I believe, is a sentiment of which you cannot disapprove.

Fernande — It is at once delicate and prudent; for I am not one of those who are married without consulting them. Neither of us knows each other, sir: to gain the knowledge, would you wish we should talk with entire frankness?

Count — Most willingly, mademoiselle: frankness is my principal quality.

Fernande — All the better! That is what I esteem above everything. Well, why do you wish to marry me?

Count — Er — why — because I could not see you without —

Fernande — Excuse me! you are forgetting our agreement already. We have seen each other three times, we have exchanged three words, and I have not the vanity to believe that that was enough to turn your head.

Count — You do not render yourself justice, mademoiselle.

Fernande — How hard it is for men to be sincere! I will add, to put you at your ease, that if you would marry me for love, I should think myself bound in honesty to refuse you, for there would be an inequality of sentiments between us which would make you unhappy, were there ever so little of delicacy in your soul.

Count — Then — ah — if with me there is not precisely what in the language of the world is called love, believe me that there are at least all the sentiments which consort owes to consort.

Fernande — All well and good ! but those sentiments are not vehement enough to urge a gentleman into a misalliance. You must, then, have some special motive. I do not doubt its being a perfectly honorable one, and if I insist on knowing it, it is solely not to leave the shadow of an afterthought on the esteem I wish to give my husband. You hesitate to answer ?

Count — No, mademoiselle. I am marrying you out of deference to the desires of my cousin — a deference which is very sweet, I assure you.

Fernande — I might have guessed it : from the moment he did not oppose this misalliance, it is because he ordered it !

Count — He has an affection for you —

Fernande — He is alone in the world ; I am his ward, and his heart attaches itself to that tie, weak as it may be. Go, my Lord, go and tell him that what he wishes shall be done.

Count — What gratitude, mademoiselle — !

Fernande — You owe me none, sir : I accept an honorable name, honorably offered — and I promise to bear it worthily.

Count — And I, on my side, assure you that in spite — But you are right : I will go and rejoice my cousin with this happy news. [Goes out.]

Fernande [alone; after a silence] — As well he as any one else, after all ! To get out of this house is the important thing. Poor father !

SCENE XI.

Enter MAXIMILIEN, manuscript in hand.

Maximilien — Excuse me, mademoiselle : I expected to find your father here.

Fernande [going over and seating herself at her work] — I believe he is in the large drawing-room ; but I doubt if you can speak with him — he has business on hand.

Maximilien [aside] — Hmph ! so much the worse, I'll leave the word blank. Strange girl ! [Puts his manuscript on the mantel, takes the ball of worsted, and going over to FERNANDE says :] Here is your blue ball, mademoiselle. What have I done to you ? Why do you treat me so harshly ? So long as I took you for a society commonplace, I thought myself far above your scorn and hardly bothered myself about it ; but the girl who lends her eyes to old Ma'am Hardouin does not scorn any one's poverty, and I have come to ask you in all honesty what I have failed of your esteem in.

Fernande [without raising her eyes from her work] — I am sorry, sir, that my way of carrying myself hurts your feelings : it is the same with you as with your predecessors, and it has not injured their careers.

Maximilien — Is that all the answer you have to make me?

Fernande — Nothing else.

Maximilien — Really, mademoiselle, if I were the lowest of men, you would not treat me any differently.

Fernande [rising] — Good-bye, sir.

Maximilien [placing himself between her and the door] — No, mademoiselle, no ! You shall not leave me so. I read an immense scorn in your eyes. The explanation I demand from you, I insist on now.

Fernande [haughtily] — You know very well that I cannot give it to you.

Maximilien — I swear to you that I know nothing, that I understand nothing, except that I am arraigned in my honor. Answer me, I beg of you ! Who has been slandering me ? What am I accused of ?

Fernande — Nothing, sir ; stop there, I beg.

Maximilien — Come, mademoiselle, you are kind, you give alms with your heart : have pity on my distress. It concerns everything I hold most dear.

Fernande — What do you hope from this comedy ? Do you expect to make me say what I blush to know ? Let me pass.

Maximilien — But you say not a word to me that is not a knife stroke ! I implore you on my knees — !

Fernande — Take care of —

Maximilien — Of what ?

Fernande — Of your career-! [Passes on.

Maximilien — Ah ! I understand ! [*Fernande stops in the doorway.*] There have been wretches here — and you judge me from them ! My justification will not wait long, and it will be for you rather than me to droop the eyes over your suspicion. Go on, I commiserate you — I commiserate you more than you outrage me, poor girl who have lost the holy ignorance of evil.

SCENE XII.

Enter MARÉCHAL and the MARQUIS.

Maréchal — Well, M. Gérard, how does your work come on ?

Maximilien — I was begging mademoiselle to charge herself with giving you, sir, a communication which costs me something : my resignation.

Maréchal — What ! your resignation ? But I won't accept it. Going to leave me just the minute I need you !

Marquis — This isn't the right thing, my dear fellow.

Maximilien — I have not explained myself well, sir. I am not the man to requite your kindness by giving you embarrassment. I wished only to ask you to look up a successor to me. I will stay till you have found one.

Maréchal — It's most annoying ! I've got used to you, you see. I hate new faces.

Marquis — What maggot has got into your head ?

Maréchal — Has somebody offered you a better place ?

Maximilien — No sir : if I leave your service, it is to reënter my own. I am not used to dependence on anything but my work, and I feel incapable of any other subjection.

Maréchal — Your work ! Lord ! you owned up that before you came to me you did copying for publishers, thirty francs a sheet, small hand.

Maximilien — Small hand, yes sir.

Maréchal — And you want to begin that starvation work over again ?

Fernande [*aside*] — I have taken away his bread !

Maréchal — Why, the thing is absurd !

Maximilien — Call to mind the fable of the Wolf and the Dog.

Maréchal — Have you been treated like a dog here ? Don't you get enough consideration ?

Maximilien — On the contrary, sir ; but by a streak in my character I am not master of, all the care that is taken to make me forget the inferiority of my position serves only to recall it to me. It is unjust and ridiculous, I know. I blame nobody but myself, but I suffer, and I am going away.

[*FERNANDE goes out at left.*]

Marquis [*aside*] — There's something back of this.

Maréchal — You're too high and mighty ; what do you want me to tell you ! I can't hold you back by main strength.

Marquis [*low, to MARÉCHAL*] — Let me talk to him.

Maréchal — Talk away.

[*Goes out at right.*]

SCENE XIII.

Marquis — See here, my dear fellow, what's going on?

Maximilien — You ought to have warned me, my Lord, that I was coming in here to be Mme. Maréchal's cosset.

Marquis — Oh, that's where the shoe pinches, eh? You've struck the good woman's fancy? Reassure yourself: she won't make you leave your cloak behind. She is a romantic creature, but quite Platonic. Her hero isn't forced to take part in the romance: she pays all the expenses. She persuades herself that she is beloved, she gives herself up to terrible combats, and at the end of the programme she triumphs over her imaginary danger by banishing the seducer into a good position. You see you can stay.

Maximilien — My Lord Marquis, that is an extenuating circumstance for Mme. Maréchal, but not for the scamp who trades on the absurdities of that lady. If I should meet one of my predecessors, I wouldn't bow to him, even after this explanation.

Marquis — You are proud.

Maximilien — Do you blame me?

Marquis — No, certainly not.

Maximilien — In consenting to remain some days yet in this intolerable position, I believe I render all that is due to you, my Lord, and to M. Maréchal; don't ask any more of me.

Marquis — I have no reply to make.

Maximilien — I will return to the library, which I shall not leave again till the arrival of my successor. [Goes out.]

Marquis — That little bastard deserves to be a gentleman. [Goes out.]

ACT III.

Scene: MARÉCHAL'S library. Solitary door at rear. On the left of the audience, a small desk with pigeon-holes, back to the characters. A little to the right of the center, a small sofa and a center-table.

SCENE I.

MARÉCHAL, alone, standing in the center behind the sofa, as if at the tribune; on the table beside him is a glass of water; he takes a swallow, and declaims:—

“And, gentlemen, be perfectly assured of it, the only solid basis in the political order, as in the moral order, is Faith! What should be taught the people is not the rights of man, it is the rights of God; for dangerous truths are no truths. The divine institution of authority—that is the first and last word of primary instruction!” [*Comes down in front, manuscript in hand.*] There! I know my first part without a hitch. It was no fool of a job: I’ve got a memory that kicks like all high-spirited things. Memory’s a subordinate faculty, anyhow. I’ll speak it, for sure. It’s superb, my speech is. I’d like to know who did it, so’s to order the next one. I don’t know whether it’ll produce the same effect on the Chamber as it did on me; but it seems to me unanswerable—it strengthens me in my convictions, it uplifts me. Oh, what a fine thing eloquence is! I was born to be an orator: I’ve got the voice and the action, the things that can’t be bought; the rest [*glancing at the manuscript*] can be bought. That little animal of a Gérard hasn’t finished his breakfast.. I’d like to have the next part of my speech. I’ve none too much time to learn it from now till to-morrow. Don’t eat at my table any more, if that humiliates you, my good lad; but don’t steal an hour from me after every meal—my time is precious. His great love of independence is needing a smoke for digestion, that’s all. There’s no more society possible with a cigar. Everything goes together: bad manners beget bad morals; and look right around you, gentlemen, you will recognize that the road of revolutions is strewn with the wreckage of social proprieties. See there! a’n’t I improvising, now?

SCENE II.

Enter MAXIMILIEN.

Maréchal — Well, young man, do you get a better breakfast at the restaurant than at my house? You can make a longer breakfast there anyhow, and no fault found.

Maximilien — I have only a few pages more of your speech to copy, sir; I shall have it all finished in an hour.

Maréchal — Well, give me what there is done of it anyway, so I can be studying it.

Maximilien [*taking the sheets from the desk drawer*] — Here it is, sir. I have taken the liberty of restoring a few words

necessary to the grammatical construction, which had evidently remained on the end of your pen.

Maréchal — I scribble so rapidly.

Maximilien — Others were illegible ; those I have replaced according to the sense of the context : as *prolegomena*, *synthetic*, *logomachy*.

Maréchal — I am pleased to see that the secrets of the language are familiar to you.

Maximilien — Those there are no secrets to anybody.

Maréchal — To anybody ! You are a man of merit, my dear Gérard. Between us two, how does my speech here strike you ?

Maximilien — It troubles me a great deal, sir ; it irritates me.

Maréchal — Irritates you ?

Maximilien — Like all reasonings you find nothing to answer to, and yet an inward sentiment protests against.

Maréchal — You admit there's nothing to answer ? That's enough for me.

Maximilien — The second part especially is of great force.

Maréchal — Ah ! yes.

Maximilien — I confess I need to collect all my ideas to defend them from so vigorous an attack.

Maréchal — You delight me. I believe I shall make a big sensation. I'm going to try and learn it by heart, for a speech read is always cold. You may bring the end to my room, if you please ; and if you will, we'll have a general rehearsal, where you can make pretended interruptions, to get my memory used to the din of [French] assemblies.

Maximilien — At your orders.

[MARÉCHAL *goes out*.]

SCENE · III.

Maximilien [*alone*] — It's true I am troubled and irritated. Troubled — that's very simple : I feel all the foundations of my belief tottering under me. But irritated — against whom ? Against the truth ? That's too silly ! and it's so, for all that ! My reason takes a road I refuse to follow it on. It seems to me it's going over to the enemy. — The enemy ! Do I hate anybody ? No ; not even that girl. What a singular product of civilization — that pure forehead, those limpid eyes, and that faded soul ! To think I was on the point of taking her for an angel with her old Ma'am Hardouin ! Ah, mademoiselle, you cosset poverty that gets down on its knees and snivels ; that

that keeps silence and stands on its feet you insult! Your poor are your charity dolls! Decidedly I hate her.

SCENE IV.

Enter MME. MARÉCHAL, a book in her hand.

Maximilien [aside] — Now for the other one!

Mme. Maréchal — I am bringing back "Jocelyn." [*MAXIMILIEN bows, sits down at the desk and begins to write. MME. MARÉCHAL replaces the book on the shelf. A silence.*] We haven't seen you since yesterday, M. Maximilien. It is through my husband that I learn you are going to leave us.

Maximilien — Yes, madame.

Mme. Maréchal — Is the true motive of your resolution the one you gave M. Maréchal?

Maximilien — Of course.

Mme. Maréchal — I am relieved! I was afraid my step-daughter had somehow hurt your feelings.

Maximilien — No, madame.

Mme. Maréchal — Then you are not leaving us angry? You will not forget entirely that this house has been yours for some days? The secretary leaves us, but the friend will return?

Maximilien — Certainly, madame.

Mme. Maréchal — I need that promise, for you have inspired me with a true friendship, M. Maximilien.

Maximilien — You are exceedingly good, madame.

Mme. Maréchal — It is not a conventional protestation, you may be sure. I trust you will some day put me to the proof.

Maximilien — Never!

Mme. Maréchal — Why never? Does your pride refuse to owe something to an almost maternal affection?

Maximilien — Ah, madame, let that impossible maternity alone.

Mme. Maréchal [dropping her eyes] — Mayn't I be at least your elder sister?

Maximilien — No, madame, no more my sister than my mother.

Mme. Maréchal [in a faint voice] — And why not?

Maximilien — Nothing.

[*A silence.*]

Mme. Maréchal — Yes, you are right: everything separates us. I was foolish to ask you to return: you must not see me

again. I understand your departure just now. You are an honest man, and I thank you.

Maximilien [aside] — There's nothing to do it for.

SCENE V.

Enter FERNANDE.

Maximilien [aside] — Again! *[Starts to write.*

Fernande [to MME. MARÉCHAL] — I have come to look for a book.

Mme. Maréchal — What book?

Fernande — I don't know in the least. I have nothing to do, and I want something to read. Advise me, M. Maximilien — something that will interest me.

[MAXIMILIEN rises and goes to the book shelves.

Fernande [aside] — I hoped I should find him alone.

[MAXIMILIEN hands her a book with a bow, and returns to desk.]

Fernande [opening the book] — "Dictionary of the Peerage." Is that an epigram? I do not deserve it. I have no more claims to rank than you. *[Giving the book to MME. MARÉCHAL.]* Here, madame.

Mme. Maréchal — If I have claims, my dear, they are well founded.

Fernande — I have no doubt of it. Give me something else, M. Maximilien — what you would give your sister.

Maximilien [aside] — She too! Too many relatives.

Mme. Maréchal [aside] — How she makes eyes at him!

A Servant [entering] — His Lordship the Count d'Outre-ville wishes to know if the ladies can be seen.

Maximilien [aside] — I'm going to be left in peace.

[Sits down at his desk again.]

Fernande — Will you go and receive him, madame?

Mme. Maréchal — He asks to see both of us.

Fernande — I am indisposed, and you must excuse me.

Mme. Maréchal [aside] — Easy to see she wants to stay alone with Maximilien. *[To the Servant.]* Show the Count in. *[Servant goes out.]*

SCENE VI.

Enter the COUNT.

Count — Pardon me, ladies, for presenting myself at so early an hour. This letter of M. d'Auberive will explain to you the irregularity of my conduct.

Maximilien [aside] — The young Count has a frank appearance — a counterfeit franc.

Mme. Maréchal [reading the letter] — Your cousin asks me, Count, to guide you in purchasing the wedding gift.¹

Count — He is occupying himself with the publication of the banns.

Fernande — Already?

Count — He does not wish to leave you time for reflection, mademoiselle.

Fernande — That is not complimentary to you, sir.

Count — It does justice to my slight deserts.

Maximilien [aside] — Is she going to marry that parchment title? She is all of a piece.

Mme. Maréchal — M. d'Auberive makes marriages as Bonaparte made war. I will put on my hat and shawl, and then I am with you. [*Aside.*] I am not sorry to have Maximilien learn the news. [*Goes out.*]

SCENE VII.

Maximilien [aside] — Am I to assist at their idyls like a King Charles?

Count — Permit me, mademoiselle, to profit by these too short moments — [*MAXIMILIEN coughs.*] We are not alone!

Fernande — My father's secretary, M. Gérard.

Count — Delighted to make his acquaintance: kindly introduce me.

Fernande [to MAXIMILIEN] — M. Maximilien, I make you acquainted with Count d'Outreville, my fiancé.

Count [aside] — Is she introducing me?

Maximilien — Sir —

Count — Charmed, sir. [*Aside.*] I don't like him. [*A silence. COUNT, to FERNANDE.*] I was told that M. Maréchal was not seeing any one. Is he indisposed?

¹ *Corbette*, the bridegroom's gift on marriage: by custom, about a tenth of the bride's dowry.

Fernande — He has shut himself up to work : hasn't he, M. Maximilien ?

Maximilien [*at his desk*] — Yes, mademoiselle. [*Silence.*]

Count — I enjoyed a delicious morning service last Sunday. I heard at the Madeleine a musical mass executed by the vocalists of our principal theaters. The organ was played by an excellent virtuoso.

Fernande — Do you love music ?

Count — Oh, certainly. I noted also with pleasure that the church was heated.

Fernande — Oh, our piety loves its comforts.

Count — And how correct it is to give them to it ! And the church was full — in Paris ! It is a consoling spectacle, this recrudescence of public devotion.

Fernande — What is your opinion, M. Maximilien ?

Maximilien — I am glad the gentleman is consoled. As for me, I have no need of consolation : I am a philosopher.

Count — Do you mean to say you are not a Christian ?

Maximilien — I beg your pardon, sir, I am ! To that degree that I practice forgiveness of injuries.

Fernande — Forgiveness or disdain ?

Maximilien — Both.

Fernande — Without making any difference between repentance and hardening of heart ?

Maximilien — I don't look so close as that.

Fernande — You are unjust, sir.

Maximilien — Possibly, mademoiselle ; you have known about all those things longer than I.

Fernande [*rising, with a troubled air*] — My stepmother is very slow : I will go and hurry her up a little. [*Goes out.*]

SCENE VIII.

Count [*aside*] — One would say there was some pique between them. [*Aloud.*] Have you been in this house long, sir ?

Maximilien — No sir, and I am not going to stay here.

Count — I regret it, sir, as I am to enter it myself.

Maximilien — Very kind, I'm sure.

Count — I trust it is not I who am driving you away ?

Maximilien — How should it be you ?

Count — Oh, you know : it explains itself when one goes out at the moment another enters.

Maximilien — Pardon me, sir, I have just finished a piece of work M. Maréchal is waiting for — and that I must take to him.
[*Bows and goes out.*]

SCENE IX.

Count [alone] — Hm! Has my marriage interrupted a little romance? I have more suspicions than I show. This person who does not need to be consoled, who practices forgiveness of injuries, and who quits his place as soon as Mlle. Fernande marries — She went out as red as a cherry, over a word — probably with a double meaning. Hm! I do not like this at all! I'll speak about it to the Marquis.

SCENE X.

A SERVANT announces the BARONESS, who enters.

Count [aside] — Heavens! the Baroness!

Baroness — You, Count? and alone? Why did they let me in here?

Count — The ladies were here a moment ago, and are to return.

Baroness — No harm, then. As to M. Maréchal, he is invisible.

Count — He is at work, they tell me.

Baroness — Good gracious, at what?

Count — Probably his speech.

Baroness — I thought that was done. That is just the subject I am here about. I hope Mme. Maréchal will help me break into the guard-house, which is robbing mortals of the sight of her spouse.

Count — I have no doubt of it.

Baroness — Neither have I. [*Aside.*] He is of an innocence that is — priceless. [*Aloud, seating herself.*] This is three times in a very few days that heaven has thrown you in my path: does it not seem like a providential design to make us acquainted?

Count [standing] — One would say so.

Baroness — Perhaps some good fortune for our cause may result from our meeting. I have a sort of presentiment of it: and you —?

Count — It would be glorious indeed for me, madame.

Baroness — You bear on your forehead the sign of the elect.

Count — You are too kind.

Baroness — Heaven gladly employs pure hands. Celibacy is a great virtue, you know.

Count — Alas ! I am to marry.

Baroness — You to marry ?

Count — Yes, madame : I marry Mlle. Fernande.

Baroness — Salvation is to be found in marriage also. My compliments, Count : your bride is charming, and fully justifies the violence of your passion.

Count — The violence ?

Baroness — Dear me ! it is only a violent passion that can excuse —

Count — But is not M. Maréchal's political part a title of nobility ? I do not think an alliance with our champion is derogatory to me.

Baroness [*aside*] — Aha, M. d'Auberive ! This is a good thing to know. [*Aloud.*] Then it is an arranged marriage you are making ?

Count — Yes, madame : my cousin desires it very much.

Baroness — Quite proper. Anyway, I do not know why I should meddle in it, and you must find me very indiscreet. Attribute it only to a sympathy perhaps inconsiderate ; but when I saw you, it seemed to me it was a friend who was coming to me. [*Taking his hand.*] Do I deceive myself ?

Count — Oh, madame ! [*Puts her hand to his lips.*]

Baroness [*withdrawing her hand with a smile*] — No — it is not a commonplace gallantry I ask from you — this little feminine hand is worthy of being pressed in a masculine fashion, and you will render it that justice some day. Do you see my bracelet ?

Count — Yours ? — Yes —

Baroness [*taking it off and giving it to him*] — It is of rather curious workmanship —

Count — Very curious.

Baroness — Especially the locket. It contains my husband's hair.

Count — What ! these white hairs ?

Baroness — Oh, my life has been austere, Count. At seventeen, I married an old man to fulfill the last wishes of my benefactress.

Count — Your benefactress ?

Baroness — An orphan in the cradle, without fortune, I was rescued by a distant relative, the Dowager of Pfeffers, an angelic creature, who reared me as her daughter. When she felt her end approaching, she called in her son Baron Pfeffers, then a sexagenarian, and taking a hand of each of us in her failing grasp, she said : "My death will put an end to your simple friendship : promise me to unite your twin loneliness, and I shall die at ease. O my son ! I confide her childhood to your old age, and your old age to her childhood." She added, turning to me, "It is not a husband I am giving you, it is a father !"

Count [with great emotion] — And he really was a father to you ?

Baroness — The most respectful of fathers. But I do not know why I give myself up to these memories — Give me back my bracelet.

Count [aside] — She is an angel !

Baroness — Gracious ! how awkward we are with one hand ! Come to my assistance, Count ! [*Holds out arm to the COUNT, who tries to refasten the bracelet.*] You are not a bit more skillful than I am. See if we can accomplish it with three hands. [*She helps the COUNT. Their eyes meet ; the COUNT turns away in embarrassment. BARONESS, aside.*] Poor fellow ! let anybody come now and tell him stories about me, and they'll get a fine reception ! [*Aloud.*] Shall you accompany your betrothed to my place this evening ?

Count — My betrothed —

Baroness — I wish it. I have never been happy ; but I love others' happiness. The blossoming out of pure love in a young soul must be charming. Mlle. Fernande must adore you.

Count — If she loves anybody —

Baroness — It isn't you ? Why not ?

Count [recollecting himself] — Nobody. I meant to say that she is marrying me in order to marry.

Baroness [aside] — There's somebody — I'll find out who. [*Aloud.*] And when is the wedding ?

Count [sadly] — The first bann will be published to-morrow, and I am just going to buy the wedding gift.

Baroness [aside] — Marriages farther along than that have been known to fail. [*Aloud.*] Nothing is left for me but to congratulate you.

SCENE XI.

Enter MME. MARÉCHAL, in handsome street costume.

Mme. Maréchal — Do excuse me, dear Baroness ! I was only just informed you were here.

Baroness — In very good company, as you see, madame. But you were going out : don't let me detain you.

Mme. Maréchal — Oh, I assure you, there is nothing pressing.

Baroness — I ought to confess that my visit was not to yourself. I had a little communication to make to M. Maréchal. Be kind enough merely to open for me the sanctum he retires to.

Mme. Maréchal — What ! haven't all fallen before you ?

Baroness — The servant pleaded his confinement, and I did not insist.

SCENE XII.

Enter MAXIMILIEN.

Mme. Maréchal — And what is my husband doing, M. Gérard, that he bars his door ?

Baroness [aside] — The secretary ! If it should be he ?

Maximilien — I think, madame, he is learning his speech by heart.

Baroness — Then he intends to speak it ?

Maximilien — Yes, madame.

Baroness [to MME. MARÉCHAL] — Then I have hardly anything more to say to him, and it will be enough for me to peep through his door. By the way, you haven't forgotten your promise for this evening ?

Mme. Maréchal — One doesn't forget such things.

Baroness — If M. Gérard has nothing better to do, I should be charmed to receive him also.

Maximilien — Me, madame ?

Count [aside] — She has great need of inviting that fellow !

Baroness — At your age, sir, one loves to see illustrious men close to. There are some of them in my drawing-room.

Maximilien — I am extremely grateful to you, madame.

Baroness — You will come, will you not ? [*To MME. MARÉCHAL.*] Please show me the way, madame.

Mme. Maréchal — I will go first, then.

[*Goes out.*]

Baroness [*low, to the COUNT, indicating MAXIMILIEN*] — That young man is very handsome!

Count [*stiffly*] — I had not noticed it.

Baroness [*aside*] — He's the one.

[*They go out.*]

SCENE XIII.

Maximilien [*alone*] — Oh no! I won't go and pass my evening at that Baroness'. I'll pass it with my old Giboyer. [*Taking his hat from the desk.*] I need to solace my heart. That patrician girl's two or three words of excuse have cut me deeper than her insult. She thought she'd do things in the grand way, and that a half-reparation was enough for a poor devil like me! Here's for Giboyer's.

SCENE XIV.

Enter FERNANDE.

Fernande — I wish to speak to you, sir.

Maximilien — To me, mademoiselle?

Fernande — Weren't you expecting it? Haven't you seen in all I did and all I said since this morning my deep regret for what took place yesterday?

Maximilien — You regret —? I am too much honored.

Fernande — It is not enough, I know. There are offenses that exact as complete a reparation from a woman as a man. I slandered you in my thoughts, and I ask your pardon. Does that suffice you?

Maximilien [*advancing*] — I thank you.

Fernande — Well, thank me by staying with my father.

Maximilien — As to that, mademoiselle, it is impossible.

Fernande — Then you don't wish me to believe myself forgiven?

Maximilien — Indeed you are, from the depths of my heart.

Fernande — Then don't leave me in remorse for having lost you your place.

Maximilien — Don't be uneasy about me, mademoiselle. I am not worried about earning my living — it doesn't cost much. You have rendered me a great service in opening my eyes to the dangers my honor was running here. Appearances

are against me, I take myself sharply to task for it, and my predecessors' example accuses me. If I remain, everybody will condemn me like them, and it will be justice.

Fernande — Justice ?

Maximilien — Indeed, yes. I shouldn't be much better than they if I resigned myself to be despised like them, wrong or right.

Fernande — But the witness of your conscience ?

Maximilien [*smiling*] — I know her : she is a meddler, and would pick a quarrel with me on the pretext that one has no right to defy opinion except for the accomplishment of a duty. Now it isn't one of those to spread jam on your bread.

Fernande — You are right : you are an honest man.

Maximilien — Ah, mademoiselle, honesty is the alphabet.

Fernande — Few people put it like you.

Maximilien — You are very skeptical for your age.

Fernande [*dropping her eyes*] — You have told me that already — twice.

Maximilien — Oh ! mademoiselle, I didn't want to make any allusion — I didn't mean — forgive me !

Fernande [*after a silence*] — I must not be judged like others, sir. My infancy was not sheltered by a mother ; it grew up with only the feeling of lawless freedom and primitive instinct. At the age when a child begins to lean on its father, a strange woman came between mine and me : I saw that my protector was too confiding, and I felt him threatened with — what ? I knew nothing about it ; but my jealous tenderness became a clairvoyance. You ought to pity me, monsieur : I have lived in pain beyond my years, a man's pain and not a girl's. Struggles have been fought in my brain which have changed the sex of my mind, to put it so. In place of feminine delicacy, a sentiment of manly honor has been developed in me ; my worth lies wholly in that ; and I give you a great proof of my esteem in explaining to you my mental laws, unfamiliar to your own esteem.

Maximilien — Say to my respect, mademoiselle.

Fernande — Our paths have met for an instant, and are about to separate, probably forever ; but I shall remember this meeting, and I trust you will not forget it.

Maximilien — Indeed not — and my humble prayers will follow you in the brilliancy of your new existence. May it hold all you promise yourself in it !

Fernande [with a sad smile] — I have not been spoiled, and I am not very exacting.

Maximilien — But your dream appears to me aristocratic enough.

Fernande — Do you think I am hunting a title?

Maximilien — Heavens ! there couldn't be anybody that — pardon me, mademoiselle, I am forgetting myself — I am abusing the chance that has placed me so deep in your confidence.

Fernande [with an effort] — Why can't you understand, after this confidence, that my father's house has become intolerable to me, and that I accept the first hand that is offered to get away from it?

Maximilien — What ! is that the only reason? — It is God's mercy that has thrown me in your way. Don't take counsel of desperation, mademoiselle ; things are not so serious as you think. I know positively, I know by the Marquis d'Auberive, that your stepmother's transgressions are only romantic child's-play.

Fernande — Would to Heaven ! but —

Maximilien — But what ? what have you come across ? Letters, avowals ? that may be, but I assure you that is all.

Fernande — And what more could there be ?

Maximilien [regarding her with astonishment, and after a silence, bowing very low] — True.

Fernande — You see I have even better reasons for leaving than you. And I am gratified to M. d'Outreville for taking me away. — I hear people coming : let us each take up our path again. Farewell, sir. [Exit.]

Maximilien [alone] — O chastity ! [Remains an instant without moving, turned toward the door where FERNANDE went out ; then goes to his desk, sits down and dips his pen in the ink.] Hold up — what a fool I am ! my job is done. [Rising.] Mareschal doesn't need me any more till this evening. I am free ! [Takes his hat.] What shall I do with my day ? Curious what a bore things are ! Pshaw ! I'll go and take a walk on the boulevards. [Sits down.] Thunder ! but I'm tired of everything !

Enter GIBOYER.

Giboyer — Morning, boy.

Maximilien — You, old friend ? You've come in the nick of time ! What are you at to-day ? I've got a furlough, let's go to Viroflay.

Giboyer — The fifteenth of January!

Maximilien — Oh, so it is.

Giboyer — You blossom out too soon. Calm these spring ebullitions and listen to me with both ears. — Maximilien, we're rich!

Maximilien [*joyfully*] — Rich?

Giboyer — I've come into a legacy from a relative I didn't know.

Maximilien — A legacy?

Giboyer — Twelve thousand francs a year.

Maximilien [*sadly*] — Is that all?

Giboyer — "Is that all!" Does my lord hobnob with millionaires?

Maximilien — No, but you had the air of announcing Pac-tolus [Midas' golden river].

Giboyer — I believe you! A thousand francs a month strikes me as mythological enough.

Maximilien — It isn't wealth, my poor friend.

Giboyer — Anyhow, it's independence. You are to be in nobody's service any longer, boy. Give your notice to M. Maréchal.

Maximilien — It's given.

Giboyer — Pshaw!

Maximilien — I haven't waited for your millions to get bored at being with the others.

Giboyer — All is for the best! You are going to resume your tour around the world.

Maximilien — To leave Paris?

Giboyer — Who's holding you there?

Maximilien — Why — you.

Giboyer — You can make believe I am still at Lyons. It isn't for my pleasure I separate from you. When we want claret to age quickly, we send it to sea; it's an outlay of money, but an economy of time. In a year, I shall have a Maximilien home from the Indies.

Maximilien — You are going to send me to the Indies?

Giboyer — Not there alone: to America too.

Maximilien — What am I to do there?

Giboyer — Well, good Lord! — to study democracy.

Maximilien — Thanks! It's too far.

Giboyer — Farther than Viroflay; but you worship voyages.

Maximilien — I don't seem to care for them any more.

Giboyer — Humph! — then what do you care for?

Maximilien — I care for — But why don't you go to America yourself, to get cured of your chimeras once for all?

Giboyer — My chimeras? — Aren't they yours any longer? This is something new! What is there back of all this?

Maximilien [*impatiently*] — Nothing. What do you want there should be?

Giboyer [*taking him by the arm*] — Now look me in the face!

Maximilien [*shaking himself loose*] — Let me alone! Hasn't a fellow the right to believe anything but what you teach him?

[*Walks toward the rear.*]

Giboyer — Oh! — And may I ask what you do believe?

Maximilien — I believe the only solid basis in the political order, as in the moral order, is faith — there!

Giboyer — You are a Legitimist at present?

Maximilien — That doesn't make one a Legitimist.

Giboyer — Don't play with words. I know but one way of introducing faith into the political domain; that is, to profess that all power comes from God, and consequently owes no accounting except to God. That is an opinion to be considered, I don't say it isn't; but when a man professes it, whatever party he thinks he belongs to, he is a Legitimist.

Maximilien — Well, let it go that I am one.

Giboyer — You are?

Maximilien — Why not?

Giboyer — Is my life to be stolen from under me a second time? [*Going up to MAXIMILIEN.*] Who has robbed me of you, cruel boy? Where did you escape me? Who has perverted you? There's a woman back of all this! None but women make these conversions! You are no Legitimist, you're in love!

Maximilien — I!

Giboyer — There's some siren here who has been amusing herself teaching you the catechism.

Maximilien [*going to the left*] — Madame Maréchal a siren! My only catechism is a speech of her husband's I've been thinking of while I copied it.

Giboyer — Maréchal's speech! A heap of sophisms and threadbare spouting!

Maximilien — What do you know about it?

Giboyer — Lord bless you, I wrote it myself!

Maximilien — You?

Giboyer [*after some hesitation*] — Well, yes, I! So you see what it's worth by the yard.

Maximilien — What, you worked at that trade? That was before your legacy, of course?

Giboyer — Despise me, trample on me, I don't expect anything better; but give me the integrity of your mind, which is the foundation of my house of life, my rehabilitation in my own eyes, my resurrection! I have dishonored in my person a soldier of Truth, I am no longer worthy to serve her; but I owe her a substitute, and I promised myself it should be you. Don't desert me, my dear child!

Maximilien — Your truth is no longer mine! The one I recognize and wish to serve is the one that dictated your speech. What astonishes me is that it hasn't disabused you of your Utopias yourself.

Giboyer — Ah, the worst of Utopias is the one that wants to make humanity retrace its steps.

Maximilien — When it has mistaken the road!

Giboyer — Rivers don't mistake, and they submerge the madmen who try to dam them back.

Maximilien — Phrases!

Giboyer — Facts! — Ask for the Restoration.

Maximilien — In a word, you have nothing to put in place of what you have destroyed.

Giboyer — We have nothing? And where have you seen in history that a society has replaced another without bringing into the world a superior dogma? — Antiquity did not admit equality before either human or divine law: the Middle Ages proclaimed it in heaven, '89 proclaimed it on earth.

Maximilien [*going to the right*] — You are right: there, are you satisfied?

Giboyer — Don't skulk out of the discussion, boy: I stand in so much need of persuading you! It isn't an opinion I am defending, it is my life!

Maximilien — Your life! See here, is there a society possible without a hierarchy?

Giboyer — No, a hundred times no.

Maximilien — Then what do you make of equality?

Giboyer — Oh, the confusion of tongues! Equality isn't a level.

Maximilien — Then what is it?

Giboyer — That great word can have but one sense, here below as above: to each according to his works! Is that, I ask you, a principle incompatible with a hierarchy?

Maximilien — It is inapplicable.

Giboyer — It is applied, in part at least, and we can already judge of its solidity. The administration, the magistracy, the army, not to speak of the clergy, are they not all actual hierarchies of merit? Well! have they budged for sixty years? Have our revolutions dreamed of laying a hand on them? They are so solid they sustain all the rest. And is it this problem half solved that they dare to proclaim insoluble? Instead of completing the edifice in its provisional parts, do they declare it stricken and vanquished by decay, and prefer to trust themselves to ruins? And those who do that are enemies of Utopias? I've written a book I'm going to make you read.

Maximilien — No.

Giboyer — No?

Maximilien — What's the good of it? If it don't convince me, it's lost time.

Giboyer — But suppose it should convince you?

Maximilien — Who told you I want to be convinced?

Giboyer — There's another woman here besides Madame Maréchal!

Maximilien — You are crazy! There's nobody here but an heiress.

Giboyer — Ah! that explains everything.

Maximilien [*indignantly*] — If I were tempted to love her, I should scorn myself, for I don't want to sell anything of mine: neither my heart, nor my pen.

Giboyer — Nor your pen? — Ingrate! when it was for you alone! —

Maximilien — For me? What right had you to render me dishonorable services? Who told you I didn't prefer poverty? Is that what you call your legacy? You can keep it, I won't touch it! [*GIBOYER falls on a sofa, his face in his hands.*] Forgive me, my old friend, you didn't know what you were doing. .

Giboyer — I knew I was devoting myself to you, that your youth must be saved from the experiences mine had succumbed to, and I have licked the mud off your road; but it was not for you to reproach me with it. Go! my pen is not the first thing I have sold for you. — I had already sold my liberty!

Maximilien — Your liberty?

Giboyer — For two years, to pay your fees at college, I spent months in prison for a paper, at so much a year. — But what does it matter! I am a blackguard, and you want nothing more to do with me. Ah! God hits me too hard! and I am not a bad man, either. There are sad destinies. It is too heavy duties that have ruined me. I began for my father — I have ended —

Maximilien [*dropping on his knees*] — For your son!

[*GIBOYER seizes him passionately in his arms.*]

ACT IV.

Scene: Large drawing-room at the BARONESS'. Two doors opening at rear, giving on a second drawing-room where a number of aged persons are seen playing whist or conversing; a side door, also open, gives on a reception room, by which entrance is made from outside. Tea-table at rear; sofa at right, set diagonally; fauteuil and chair at left; sofa against the wall; fauteuil near the table, left rear.

SCENE I.

Present: BARONESS and FERNANDE, leaving the large drawing-room.

Baroness — You see, mademoiselle, I told no falsehood in saying that my salon is not lively.

Fernande — It is very interesting, madame: you have a reunion of the celebrities of all the régimes.

Baroness — Reunion — say union! But those celebrities do not compose a bouquet of the highest freshness, I admit. So I have resolved to put new life into it by the introduction of some right-thinking [*religious*] young ladies, and I am waiting this very evening for two or three as courageous as you.

Fernande — Easy courage, madame.

Servant [*announcing*] — His Lordship the Viscount de Vrillière!

[*VISCOUNT enters and bows to BARONESS, who gives him her hand.*]

Baroness — Your mother must be better since here you are!

Viscount — Entirely recovered, thank Heaven!

Baroness — Then hurry and reassure that kind Mme. de Vieuxtour. It was only a moment ago she was asking me the news.

Viscount — Excellent woman !

[*Bows and enters rear drawing-room.*]

Baroness — That quadragenarian is the baby of our group, — the need of some young people is making itself felt too ; but it is very delicate, — I do not wish the shadow of coquetry here with me. I am much afraid of being reduced to small-fry of no consequence — like your father's secretary, for instance.

Fernande — You have not made a fortunate stroke in your attempt at illustration. M. Gérard is anything but a small-fry of no consequence ; on the contrary, he is a man of the first merit — at least they say so.

Baroness — I don't dispute that : I meant without consequence among women. A woman of assured social standing can't pay attention to a nobody — isn't that true ?

Fernande — You will think me very plebeian, madame, for holding that a man of honor is not a nobody.

Baroness [*aside*] — Isn't that clear enough ? [*Aloud.*] By a nobody, I mean a man without birth. As for the rest, M. Gérard is charming : he has a natural distinction very rare even with us. If he entered a drawing-room along with any given gentleman, and the two were heard announced, it is unquestionably to him the grand name would be applied. He was evidently not made to be a secretary.

Fernande — And he is not one any longer.

Baroness — Ah ! since when ?

Fernande — Since yesterday.

Servant [*announcing*] — The Chevalier de Germoise.

[*CHEVALIER comes in and bows to BARONESS, who gives him her hand.*]

Baroness — You are among the last to come.

Chevalier — Happy that you notice it, madame !

Baroness — M. d'Auberive was beginning to be impatient.

Chevalier — His boston [*card game*] doesn't like to wait. I will offer myself up to his blows.

[*Bows and enters rear drawing-room.*]

Baroness [*to FERNANDE*] — And why isn't he a secretary any longer ?

Fernande — For the reason you gave : he was not made to be one.



Baroness [aside] — She lowers her eyes. [*Aloud.*] I don't know why I am so interested in him. Has he any other position?

Fernande — No, madame, not that I know of; and it would be very kind of you, since you are interested in him, to exercise yourself in his favor. You are all-powerful.

Baroness — That is putting it pretty strongly; but I *should* be grieved not to succeed in being of service to you.

Fernande — Oh, I should be so grateful to you, madame!

Servant [announcing] — M. Couturier of Haut-Sarthe.

Baroness — Pardon me! here is an important personage I have a word or so to say to. [*Taking FERNANDE out.*] And besides, if I confiscate you to my own profit, I shall get into hot water with M. d'Outreville.

Fernande — Do you think so?

Baroness [having come to the rear] — I will see about that poor young man.

Fernande — Thank you!

[*They press hands.* FERNANDE returns to drawing-room.]

Baroness [aside] — That's one! Now for cutting M. Maréchal's glory short.

SCENE II.

Baroness [to M. COUTURIER] — How is your Lordship?

Couturier — And your Ladyship?

Baroness — A little bewildered.

Couturier — What about?

[*They sit down, left, one on a fauteuil, the other on a chair.*]

Baroness — About the strangest thing, the most wonderful, the most surprising, the most — See Mme. de Sévigné¹ for the rest of the litany. "I'll give you ten, I'll give you a hundred."

Couturier — Give me one.

Baroness — I had a visit from that poor M. d'Aigremont this afternoon.

Couturier — Why "poor"? is he sick?

Baroness — Worse than that! You'll see! The conversation naturally turned to politics, to our plan of campaign, to Maréchal, to the speech.

Couturier — Well?

¹ Vol. 15, p. 64, of this set.

Baroness — *Didn't* he regret that they had not intrusted it to him?

Couturier — He? a Protestant? He's mad.

Baroness — He is so, I said that myself at once. It is the more disquieting that there's method in his madness.

Couturier — How is that?

Baroness — He says that religious dissensions, like political dissensions, ought to be blotted out in face of the common enemy, that all churches ought to join hands to combat the revolution, that a Protestant pleading our cause would have more weight, that it would be a great example, that — Oh, I can't tell you any more of his extravagances!

Couturier — Permit me! — all this is not so extravagant, madame; on the contrary, it is of a depth, a breadth of view, which astonishes me in D'Aigremont.

Baroness [*innocently*] — Is it?

Couturier — That idea is none of his, some one must have suggested it to him. I am surprised that so elevated a mind as yours was not struck with it as I am!

Baroness — I am only a woman, and I abase myself before your powerful reason.

Couturier — Our speech delivered by a Protestant — that would be a first triumph in itself!

Baroness — Oh, good gracious!

Couturier — Why that exclamation!

Baroness — I hope you are not going to take it away from poor Maréchal?

Couturier — No, of course not; but there will be more than one speech delivered on the subject.

Baroness [*emphatically*] — Give the others to whom you will: it is the first that strikes home. Belling the cat is the vital operation.

Couturier — That is true.

Baroness — It is, isn't it?

Couturier — So true that every other consideration pales before it.

Baroness — What do you mean?

Couturier — Dear Baroness, in the name of our cause, I beg you to abandon your protégé.

Baroness — Alas! you attack me where I am defenseless. I can refuse nothing to the name you invoke. But is there really a transcendent enough interest there for us to resolve on

hurting that excellent man's feelings? It is dreadfully hard, my friend.

Couturier [*rising*] — What a slip it was not to have thought of D'Aigremont sooner! Then, too, why suppose he'll accept? Here we have already engaged Maréchal.

Baroness [*rising*] — We made him ourselves, and by that title he really has some rights over us.

Couturier [*shrewdly*] — Pardon me, the contrary would be more just.

Baroness — So I've put my foot in it again! — Poor Maréchal! — I know quite well what could be said to him: he could be made to understand that this is not a question of persons; that you in his place would not hesitate to efface yourself for the general interest.

Couturier — And that where I would not hesitate, it would be a fine thing for M. Maréchal to hesitate, you will own.

Baroness — All the same, I can't tell you how painful that sort of execution is to me; but after all, my friendship for Maréchal is obliged to surrender to your arguments.

Couturier — I expected no less from your patriotism.

Baroness — Not all the members of the committee will be so disinterested as I am, I can tell you. You'll meet with resistance from M. d'Auberive.

Couturier — Yes, he is greatly attached to Maréchal.

Baroness — All the more because he is marrying Mlle. Fernande to a cousin of his whom you'll see here.

Couturier — Is that so! That scion of the first families consents to cross his blood with ours?

Baroness — He probably conjectures that that small personage may have blue blood in her veins. But that has nothing to do with us. You understand what value he attaches to coloring the misalliance by a quasi-nobility of position.

Couturier — Thanks for the information. I will go at once and gather in all the other adhesions: they will force his.

Baroness [*looking to the left*] — Mme. Maréchal! Goodness, how afflicting all this is!

Couturier — Break it gently to her; as for me, I shall do my duty, as I have always done, without hesitation and without weakness.

Baroness — Antique soul!

[M. COUTURIER goes out by one of the rear doors. MME. MARÉCHAL enters by the other.]

SCENE III.

Baroness [aside] — That's two! Now for the other one! [*Aloud.*] You don't think of going away, I hope?

Mme. Maréchal — Pardon me, I am tired. Nothing less than the pleasure of coming to see you could have brought me out this evening. I don't know what has happened to M. Maréchal.

Baroness — He has been seeking a little solitude in his library: let us respect his meditations. I merely have a piece of confidential information to ask of you. [*Conducting her to a sofa.*] Won't you favor me with five minutes of your fatigue, my dear friend? [*They seat themselves.*]

Mme. Maréchal — You will make me forget it, dear Baroness.

Baroness — Why is M. Gérard leaving your husband?

Mme. Maréchal — He is a very proud young man, to whom dependence is insupportable.

Baroness — Yes, that is the official motive; but I want you to tell me the true motive. I must know what to count on with that youth before I stir around in his behalf.

Mme. Maréchal — Take him under your wing, Baroness, he is worthy of it! He has the most delicate, the most loyal, the most reliable heart that can be imagined.

Baroness — You charm me. I didn't know — but I was afraid he might be an intriguer. I prefer to believe in the sincerity of his love.

Mme. Maréchal [dropping her eyes] — His love! Who for?

Baroness — Why — Fernande.

Mme. Maréchal [sharply] — Fernande! Poor fellow! He is a thousand miles from thinking of her.

Baroness — Really? Are you quite sure?

Mme. Maréchal [uneasily] — But what makes you think —

Baroness — Oh dear, nothing; let's talk no more about it; I was mistaken.

Mme. Maréchal — A woman of your tact is not mistaken except on strong appearances. What have you thought noticeable?

Baroness — What can I say to you? I foolishly imagined that Fernande's marriage was not unrelated to the young man's departure. Did he speak of leaving you before D'Outreville's suit?

Mme. Maréchal [struck with this] — No; and it was that

very day he sent in his resignation. But no, he didn't learn of the marriage till this morning.

Baroness — There, you see! And unless we suppose that Fernande informed him of it yesterday, which is impossible —

Mme. Maréchal [*greatly stirred up*] — Why impossible?

Baroness — Well! we should have to admit that the fellow is not indifferent to her, which I don't wish to believe. That is not the difficulty; but she has just been recommending him to me with a warmth rather surprising in a person usually so self-contained.

Mme. Maréchal — Is that so?

Baroness — She has a determined little head.

Mme. Maréchal — Don't I know it? And that Gérard — Could I have been played with so far?

Baroness — But we won't be in a hurry —

Mme. Maréchal — A thousand little things come back to me now: that man's offended air, Fernande's supplicating attitude — she tried to be alone with him — [*turning toward the drawing-room*] and there, look at the two of them talking together! Have they forgotten altogether that they are not alone? That simpleton D'Outreville that doesn't see anything!

Baroness — I wouldn't be positive of it; he is looking at them with an uneasy air, as if they were in the way to rob him. Hm! all this might have a bad ending; the marriage hasn't taken place yet — look out!

Mme. Maréchal — You alarm me!

Baroness — You have no time to lose, if you still wish the alliance of the Count. I cannot believe in Fernande's duplicity; she has been led astray by her unknown; recall her to herself, by making her suddenly realize the gulf that separates her from that fellow.

Mme. Maréchal — Yes, but by what means?

Baroness — Publicly put that whippersnapper back into his place.

Mme. Maréchal — On what occasion?

Baroness — Occasion? Why, here, this very evening, one can be found; let's look for it. A humiliated love doesn't last long.

Mme. Maréchal — You are right — thank you, dear Baroness! Fernande shall be rescued — [*aside*] and I revenged! [*Aloud, seeing MAXIMILIEN leaving the drawing-room.*] There's

that little cheat; let's go back in—I shan't be mistress of myself.

Baroness — Yes, don't let us seem to be conspiring.

[*They go out by the left rear, while MAXIMILIEN enters by right rear.*]

SCENE IV.

Maximilien [*alone*] — I didn't want to come—why did I come? Oh, how handsome she is! What an adorable spirit! I feel myself invaded by an insane love, and already I don't belong to myself enough to defend myself! Well! why struggle against myself? why cling to my reason, which is escaping me? No, let's yield to the intoxications of the abyss! The die is cast! I love her! I love her! I love her! Ah, the sweet resolution! how entertaining it is to be in society! I resume interest in everything—

SCENE V.

Servant [*announcing*] — M. de Boyergi!

Maximilien — If only to see Déodat's successor!

Maximilien [*to GIBOYER as he enters*] — You?

Giboyer [*aside, with an angry gesture*] — Go and take a walk!

Maximilien — Is it you that sign "Boyergi"?

Giboyer [*sourly*] — What's that to you?

Maximilien — Then you are going to continue that horrible trade? Poor father!

Giboyer — In the first place, you promised to forget that I was your father!

Maximilien — I promised not to tell of it; but to forget it! — Did I promise to be an ingrate?

Giboyer — Ah! — I ask only one proof of gratitude, and that is to let me accomplish my work. I don't need your respect.

Maximilien — But *I* need to respect you! What sort of unrighteous contest would you set up between my tenderness and my honor? Which of the two do you wish to overpower the other?

Giboyer [*seated on the sofa*] — But I can't let you get used to misery!

Maximilien — Do you think I will go on accepting your

benefactions, knowing what they cost you? Haven't you put me in a way of earning my living and yours too? Have we so many necessities, you and I? We know poverty: let's take up the road again cheerfully, arm in arm. Won't it be charming to live by our labor in a garret, we two?

Giboyer — Charming for me, yes!

Maximilien — And for me, then! I know now what you are.. I am proud of you: I have read your book!

Giboyer — Has it convinced you?

Maximilien — Most assuredly! [*Putting his hand on GIBOYER's head.*] And I don't want you to debase any longer the great mind that is there. — My old friend, how you must have suffered, vilifying your noble ideas in that crab's journal! Quit it, I beg of you — [*smiling*] I order you! Maybe I haven't some rights over you too? You have licked enough mud off my road, as you put it: wipe off your mouth by kissing me. [*Kisses him on the cheek.*]

Giboyer — Brave child!

Maximilien — You'll obey me?

Giboyer — I've got to. Aren't you my master?

Maximilien — Everything succeeds with me to-day. Thank the Lord!

Giboyer — Everything! Why, what more is there?

Maximilien — Nothing.

Giboyer — And you have secrets from your old comrade?

Maximilien — We'll write your resignation when I go home with you, and I'll carry it in to-morrow morning early, so that the gentlemen of the committee will have noses a foot long¹ when they wake up. How delightful to waft away their slugger! You don't suspect what they mean to do here: it's an actual conspiracy against our ideas.

Giboyer — Very plainly: the Toryism of the drawing-rooms, with ramifications in the dining-rooms and the boudoirs.

Maximilien — You may joke; but don't be too confident! That party calls itself legion.

Giboyer — A legion of colonels without regiments, a staff without troops. They take the curious folks who watch them prancing around for their army; they pass the spectators in review: but the day of a serious enrollment they'll find themselves beating the roll-call in the desert.

¹ *I.e.*, be tricked like a pantomime clown. The literal translation is retained here because the phrase is singled out for sarcasm in the article following.

Maximilien — At that rate they are not very formidable.

Giboyer — Very much so to the governments they uphold. Those fellows can't upset anything but the carriages they drive, but they upset them with a vengeance!

Two Servants bring in tea.

Maximilien [*looking toward the drawing-room*] — Sh! they're coming! The Marquis d'Auberive! Who's he with?

Giboyer — With the eminent Couturier of Haut-Sarthe — a reformed liberal!

Maximilien — They seem to adore each other.

Giboyer — I should say so! Brothers and friends! Do you know, I amused myself in my article this morning by letting slip a few slams at this same Couturier: the Marquis blue-penciled the passage, with the simple and pregnant remark, "No more of that!"

Maximilien — Well, the Marquis won't blue-pencil you any more.

SCENE VI.

The entire company gather in the drawing-room.

Marquis [*to M. COUTURIER, front of stage, left*] — Since the committee is unanimous for M. d'Aigremont, I can only bow to its decision, painful as it is to me.

Couturier — It only took it in self-defense, Marquis, and in presence of a higher interest, which you recognize yourself.

Marquis — I don't say no, my dear fellow, but I'd rather somebody else took the job of dealing poor Maréchal the blow.

Couturier — We thought it would be less severe from your hands; but if it costs you too much, I will take it on myself.

Marquis — Thank you. [*Sits himself at the left. COUTURIER loses himself in the throng.*]

Chevalier [*to a lady*] — That little Gérard is really more of a man than Count d'Outreville; but is it quite sure that Mlle. Fernande has a special liking for the secretary? The Baroness has a fear of it that is very like a certainty.

[*Leads her to a fauteuil.*]

Mme. Maréchal [*seated on the sofa, to the COUNT who brings her tea*] — Boiling, if you please; I like it boiling.

Mme. de la Vieux-tour [*behind the sofa, to VISCOUNT DE VRILLIÈRE*] — Poor woman! she likes everything that burns her fingers.

Viscount de Vrillière — Gad! these plebeian ambitions well deserve to be scalded a little.

Mme. de la Vieux tour — After all, the Baroness may be mistaken.

Viscount de Vrillière — Huh! the young man is charming.

Mme. de la Vieux tour — Not so much as the title of Countess. [*During this dialogue she has ascended the stage to the center, and looks at the audience as she says:*] Father Vernier was admirable this morning. Were you there, M. de Vrillière?

Viscount de Vrillière — I couldn't get in.

Giboyer [*aside*] — People turned away.

Mme. de la Vieux tour — You missed it. He had thoughts on charity so touching, so novel!

Giboyer [*aside*] — Did he say it wasn't necessary to give it?

Mme. Maréchal — I was shocked by Mme. Dervieux's toilette. Did you notice it?

Baroness — No.

Mme. Maréchal — Just fancy, she had on a buff satin dress trimmed with cherry velvet clear around, coat of the same trimmed with ermine, and her hat was white tulle puffed, covered with small cherry feathers. We go to church to commune with ourselves and not to make a display, don't you think?

Marquis [*at the other end of the stage*] — And I am pleased to see, madame, that you were communing.

Mme. Maréchal — Of course I was: I had a Carmelite dress.

Mme. de la Vieux tour — Which fitted you ravishingly.

Baroness [*going over to GIBOYER, behind the sofa*] — Do you not take tea, monsieur?

Giboyer — Many thanks, madame: I am afraid of it.

Baroness [*in MME. MARÉCHAL'S ear, indicating on the other side MAXIMILIEN standing and talking to FERNANDE seated*] — Now's the time. [*Goes toward the rear.*]

Mme. Maréchal — M. Gérard! take away my cup.

Count [*rushing forward to take it at a sign from the BARONESS*] — Madame —

[*MAXIMILIEN, who has come forward at MME. MARÉCHAL'S summons, stops on seeing the COUNT'S movement.*]

Mme. Maréchal — Let it alone, Count — that young man is there.

Fernande [*aside*] — This is too much! [*Rises and goes quickly to the table at rear. MAXIMILIEN takes a step backward.*]

Giboyer [*aside*] — Ringing him up for a servant !

Mme. Maréchal [*still holding her cup*] — M. Gérard !

Fernande [*from the table*] — M. Gérard ! will you permit me to wait on you ?

Maximilien — Mademoiselle, I have refused it already.

Fernande [*coming to him with a cup of tea*] — You will not refuse it from my hand. [MAXIMILIEN bows and takes the cup. General astonishment. Profound silence.]

Giboyer [*aside*] — There's the secret ! It casts a chill. [To MME. MARÉCHAL.] How that cup embarrasses you ! In default of my nephew, madame, let the uncle be your domestic. [*Takes the cup from the hands of the stupefied MME. MARÉCHAL, and carries it back to the table.*]

Baroness [*to MME. MARÉCHAL*] — My poor friend ! who could have foreseen it ?

Mme. Maréchal — And her father who isn't here !

[*They go back into the drawing-room ; the guests straggle after, a few at a time.*]

SCENE VII.

Count d'Outreville [*to MARQUIS*] — Well, cousin, what do you say to this ?

Marquis — I say that Fernande has made delicate reparation for an impertinence of her stepmother's, that's all.

Count — "That's all" ? But she loves that young man, monsieur, she loves him !

Marquis — You're crazy.

Count — Possibly ; but I notify you that I renounce this marriage.

Marquis — You renounce -- ?

Count — Plebeian and compromised both is too much !

Marquis — Effectually compromised indeed, if you break it, for that rupture would confer a grave significance on an incident by itself insignificant.

Count — I am, very sorry ; but —

Marquis — Consider, monsieur, that Fernande is my ward, — so to speak, my daughter ; that it is I who arranged this marriage, and therefore I am in some sort responsible for the consequences.

Count — Not so much as I am, cousin ; consequently you will freely admit that I must be the judge of the question.

Marquis — So you refuse to marry her?

Count — I do !

Marquis — Very well, monsieur ! you will account for it to me.

Count — Fight — with my second father !

Marquis — I disinherit you to put you at your ease.

Count — But your white hair, monsieur —

Marquis — Don't concern yourself about that. I am as strong as ever with the sword.

Count — But suppose she loves this young man ?

Marquis — If she does love him, which I deny, she has a brave heart, in which nothing can prevail over sworn faith. Let's go and sit beside her to protect her by our presence from the charitable insinuations of all those devout people. Be a French knight for once in your life.

Maréchal [*entering*] — Ah, Marquis !

Marquis [*to the COUNT*] — Go on without me, monsieur : I will rejoin you. [COUNT goes out.]

SCENE VIII.

Maréchal — What was the Count talking to you about? Was it that thoughtless performance of my daughter's?—for it was nothing but thoughtlessness.

Marquis — The Count and I are convinced of that.

Maréchal — Ah ! I can draw breath again ! My wife had struck despair into my soul. So the marriage still holds ?

Marquis — More than ever ; for it has become indispensable to Fernande. You understand that a rupture, after this foolish incursion, would compromise her irrevocably !

Maréchal — That's so !

Marquis — Consequently, if an event should happen that rendered your position toward your son-in-law more difficult, that would be no reason for taking up your old repugnances to an aristocratic alliance.

Maréchal — Certainly not ; but what event ?

Marquis — If, for one cause or another, you should momentarily lose the moral superiority which your political rôle gives you —

Maréchal — But how should I lose it ?

Marquis — M. de la Haut-Sarthe has something to say to you.

Maréchal — What? you make me tremble.

Marquis — He'll tell you.

Maréchal — In the name of Heaven, Marquis, explain yourself. I have courage.

Marquis — Well! — the committee has decided — in spite of my efforts, my poor friend! — but I was alone on my side.

Maréchal — What has it decided?

Marquis — That the speech is to be taken away from you.

Maréchal — But this is infamous! why, I know it by heart.

Marquis — Too bad! you'll have to forget it.

Maréchal — Never! How have I earned this insult?

Marquis — They are distressed at inflicting it on you, they ask your pardon; but the interest of the cause takes precedence of everything. They have found a Protestant on the right side.

Maréchal — A Protestant? why, it's absurd! My speech will have no common-sense then.

Marquis [*seeing GIBOYER enter*] — There, my dear fellow, is the author of your speech.

Maréchal — M. de Boyergi?

Marquis — Ask him what he thinks of it. As for me, I've got to chaperon your daughter. [*Goes out.*]

SCENE IX.

Maréchal — What do you think about it, M. de Boyergi?

Giboyer — About what, monsieur?

Maréchal — About their choosing a Protestant to deliver my — your — speech?

Giboyer — Those gentlemen regard it as a brilliant homage rendered to truth: I think it furnishes a brilliant start-off to a reply. [*In an oratorical tone.*] What, gentlemen! is it a Protestant you have come to hear? But if he is sincere, the first thing he has to do on leaving here is to abjure you!

Maréchal — That's so! I ask you just a minute, what's a Protestant that don't protest?

Giboyer — What is it, gentlemen? It is the gravest symptom of religious apathy that has yet been given in our age! You are more advanced in philosophical religion than ourselves. The choice of your orator is a confession: the Middle Ages are dead, and it is you who place the last stone on their tomb. Why do you talk of resuscitating them?

Maréchal — Bravo! bravo! I'd give a hundred thousand francs out of my own pocket to throw that in the teeth of the wire-puller that's taken my place!

Giboyer — The fact is, these gentlemen have been guying you cruelly.

Maréchal — It's an indignity!

Giboyer — A hoax. They are playing you for a sucker.

Maréchal — I'll let them see if I am one!

Giboyer — They are covering you with ridicule so you shan't dare show yourself again.

Maréchal — They'll find they've caught a Tartar.

Giboyer — Unluckily, you can't do anything against them.

Maréchal — I don't know about that!

Giboyer [*in a low voice*] — There would be one fine revenge to take on them.

Maréchal — What's that?

Giboyer — To answer the speech.

Maréchal — Me?

Giboyer — Strike them with lightning.

Maréchal — Oh, if I could!

Giboyer — Nothing is wanting but the lightning — and that can be got for you.

Maréchal — Who by, you?

Giboyer — No, I haven't force enough. I don't know but one man able to confute my speech: that is my nephew.

Maréchal — Little Gérard?

Giboyer — Same.

Maréchal — But he found it irrefutable!

Giboyer — He has thought it over since then, and demolished it to me piece by piece. Shall I tell you? He has overthrown my ideas so thoroughly that I have abandoned the party, and am going to give in my resignation as editor-in-chief to-morrow.

Maréchal — Thunder! Maximilien has converted you that far? Why, then he can write me a speech that —

Giboyer [*kissing his fingers with a smack*] — Oh!

Maréchal — Will one night be enough for it?

Giboyer — Easy.

Maréchal — And I can read it to-morrow?

Giboyer — What a surprise for them!

Maréchal — Is your nephew discreet?

Giboyer — As much so as I am.

Maréchal — Nothing must be said about it! Neither to my wife, nor my daughter, nor anybody! And he must bring me his manuscript to-morrow morning.

Giboyer — A bargain.

Maréchal — What a revenge!

[*Reënters the drawing-room by door at right.*]

Giboyer — There's a recruit the democracy won't be proud of. But pshaw! Maximilien's happiness must be assured before everything.

SCENE X.

Maximilien [*leaving the drawing-room by door at left*] — Are you coming?

Giboyer — You look like a drunken man.

Maximilien — I am.

Giboyer — To sober yourself up, you are going to pass the night in writing the refutation of Maréchal's speech. I'll furnish you the exordium.

Maximilien — What for?

Giboyer — I've got a deputy who lacks nothing but words.

Maximilien — It isn't I that will give them to him. I don't care for politics at present!

Giboyer — What! You don't hate opinions to which merit and honor are an insufficient dowry?

Maximilien — That's true.

Giboyer — Opinions that separate you from Fernande?

Maximilien — I execrate them!

Giboyer — You don't feel rage mounting in your heart before this stupid obstacle?

Maximilien — Yes!

Giboyer — You don't experience the need of hurling yourself on it and fastening your teeth in it?

Maximilien — You are right! Even though I break my teeth on it, I'll leave their print in the rock! Let us throw to the winds the protestation of despair, the dust-besprinkling of the vanquished! Come on!

Giboyer — Go and get your overcoat. [*Aside.*] As to me, I never wear one — it's too hot!

[*They go out.*]

ACT V.

Scene: same as Act II.

SCENE I.

Present: MME. MARÉCHAL, seated in the center of the stage, embroidering; FERNANDE, going and coming in silence.

Mme. Maréchal — You are much agitated, mademoiselle.

Fernande — And you are very calm, madame.

Mme. Maréchal — I have no reason for not being.

Fernande — When my father may be at the tribune this very moment !

Mme. Maréchal — Ah ! that is what occupies you ?

Fernande — And what then, madame ? I admire your calmness.

Mme. Maréchal — Your father's speech is magnificent, and I am sure it will be a triumph.

Fernande — Oh, I don't ask as much as that.

Mme. Maréchal — I can believe it : he unfurls a flag that is not yours.

Fernande — I have no flag, madame : I do not mix in politics.

Mme. Maréchal — You surprise me : I should have believed you republican at heart.

Fernande — Why ?

Mme. Maréchal — It is an opinion which brings the distant near together.

Fernande — I don't understand you.

Mme. Maréchal — Do you still play the guileless after yesterday's outbreak ?

Fernande — Outbreak ? There is no one but you, madame, to interpret ill so simple an action. I am sure that everybody in their hearts approved me, beginning with M. d'Oùtreville, who is most interested in the question.

Mme. Maréchal — If you fancy you enchanted him with your little manifestation ! I have still to understand why he did not revoke his word.

Fernande — If I suspected him of having thought for an instant of doing so, I would revoke my own.

Mme. Maréchal — You are severe !

Fernande — I do not admit that he doubts my integrity.

A Servant — Is madame at home ?

Mme. Maréchal — Who to ?

Servant — Her Ladyship the Baroness Pfeffers !

Fernande [*aside*] — Again ?

Mme. Maréchal — Show her in.

SCENE II.

Mme. Maréchal [*showing the BARONESS to a seat*] — Do you know, Baroness, you are spoiling us ?

Baroness [*standing*] — Alas, madame ! I am here to-day much against my will, charged with a mission which will certainly not surprise you, but the painful duty of which belonged rather to M. d'Auberive than to me. M. d'Outreville judged otherwise, and despite my repugnance to meddle in such delicate matters, I was compelled to yield to his entreaties.

Mme. Maréchal — He revokes his word ? [*To FERNANDE.*] There ! what did I tell you ? There is the fruit of your eccentricities ! After that scene of yesterday, this rupture is a disaster for you !

Baroness — Let us not exaggerate, madame : Mlle. Fernande's situation remains intact. M. d'Outreville, like a true gentleman, shrank from a rupture such that it might give rise to interpretations unpleasant for his fiancée ; but M. Maréchal's speech has removed all his scruples.

Fernande — My father has made his speech ?

Baroness — Yes, mademoiselle. It was on leaving the Chamber that M. d'Outreville hastened to me, indignant at that unqualified somersault.

Fernande — Somersault !

Baroness — What would you call it ? I admit that M. Maréchal was galled, that he refused to comprehend the reasons of profound suitability which determined the committee to make choice of another orator —

Mme. Maréchal — Another orator ! what do you mean ?

Baroness — Didn't you know they withdrew the speech from him to give it to M. d'Aigremont ?

Mme. Maréchal — Why, we are made a laughing-stock of, madame !

Fernande — But you say my father did speak.

Baroness — Alas ! yes. He rose after M. d'Aigremont, to the great surprise of our friends, and, to their still greater indignation, read a passionate reply to the noble words we had just heard.

Mme. Maréchal — How shocking ! Then we are under the ban of opinion !

Baroness — I am afraid so, madame. M. d'Outreville left the sitting, he came to me: you know the rest.

Fernande — Tell him, madame, that there was no need of his demanding back his promise: my father has given it to him.

Baroness — That response is worthy of you, mademoiselle. Adieu, madame. I share, believe me, in the grief which the conduct of M. Maréchal causes you. [*Aside.*] In one month I shall wear azure with three golden byzants.

Enter MARÉCHAL.

Fernande [*putting her arms around his neck*] — Father !

[*MARÉCHAL bows graciously to the BARONESS, who sweeps out without looking at him.*]

SCENE III.

Maréchal [*to FERNANDE*] — Where's the Baroness going with that insulted-princess air ?

Mme. Maréchal — Do you ask that ? —

Maréchal — Oh, so you know already ? Well, so much the better !

Mme. Maréchal — Apostate !

[*FERNANDE goes to work at her tapestry.*]

Maréchal — Very fine, Madame Maréchal ! If there's been any apostasy on my part, it was the day I abandoned my ancestors' principles, and not the day I returned to them. I am a pure plebeian, even if you don't know it !

Mme. Maréchal — Ah ! if I could ever have doubted it —

Maréchal — My name isn't even a name, it's a nickname: I have a marshal [*farrier*] among my ancestors — not a marshal of France, do you understand ? but a blacksmith marshal. You're free to blush for it ; as for me, I'm proud of it.

Mme. Maréchal — Good Heavens ! what I exposed myself to by a misalliance !

Maréchal — Let me alone with your misalliance! You are a De la Vertpillière just as much as I am a palace official.

Mme. Maréchal — Sir!

Maréchal — Your name is Robillard [*shyster*]; your great-grandfather was an attorney.

Mme. Maréchal — Sir! sir! at least respect my family —

Maréchal — Madame, it isn't respectable. — I only esteem you the more in other respects: I have no prejudices myself. I despise the nobility: the only distinction I admit between men is that of fortune.

Mme. Maréchal — If you despise the nobility, they return it in full. Count d'Outreville has already sent word by the Baroness that he will not marry the daughter of a demagogue.

Maréchal — Indeed! He'll no longer do me the honor of pocketing my shillings, this frayed-out lordling? His Lordship the Count d'Outreville breaks his pledges to me? He discharges me from his alliance? What a coincidence! I was going to send in my resignation to him.

Mme. Maréchal — Ah! your language, sir, sinks with your sentiments: you grow vulgar.

Maréchal — I speak right straight out, as becomes a freeman. Far from me be the affectation of courts:

“I am one of the people, and so are my loves —”

without offense to you, Mlle. Robillard.

Mme. Maréchal — You are a revolutionary, a savage, that's what you are!

Maréchal — Come now, you make me laugh! That's all the effect that ought to be produced on true strength by the transports of weakness.

Mme. Maréchal [*going*] — I yield you the place, sir.

Maréchal — Go back to your woman's sphere, and stay there from now on.

[*She stalks wrathfully out.*]

SCENE IV.

Maréchal [*going and sitting down beside FERNANDE'S work*] — A'n't you going to say anything to me, girlie? Are you mourning over D'Outreville? Were you in love with him?

Fernande — No, father: it was a marriage of arrangement.

Maréchal — He's no beauty, that fellow isn't. I don't know how I ever came to think of giving a handsome girl like you to that spindle-shanked lord. Make yourself easy, you won't lack suitors with your fortune and — your father's glory.

Fernande — Then you made a great success?

Maréchal [*modestly*] — Enormous, child! One the like of hasn't been seen for ten years. Ah! those committee fellows must be gnawing their fingers for having taken that speech away from me! I just pulverized it! You'll read in the *Moniteur* to-morrow morning. You a'n't a Legitimist yourself, I hope?

Fernande — I am nothing; but I was surprised that you should be one, for you had no reason to be.

Maréchal [*rising*] — I wasn't one at heart. I foolishly allowed myself to be stuffed with it by your stepmother and that infernal Marquis; I believed in a possible alliance between the old aristocracy and the new: but the bandage has fallen from my eyes.

Fernande [*taking his arm tenderly*] — Whatever it is, I am very happy in your success, and very happy above all that it is over.

Maréchal — Over? This is only the beginning! All the orators of the other party are set down for to-morrow. They are going to deliver a sharp assault on me; but they don't know who they are dealing with! It will be my turn day after to-morrow: my friends count on me; I won't fail them.

Servant [*announcing*] — M. de Boyergi!

Maréchal — Tell him to come in. Leave us now, Fernande: we want to have a talk.

[*Kisses her on the forehead; she goes out.*]

SCENE V.

Enter GIBOYER.

Maréchal — Well, my dear Boyergi, have you come to look for my thanks?

Giboyer — I bring you my congratulations.

Maréchal — I accept them, by jingo! But a good share of them ought to go back to your nephew, do you hear? he has rendered my ideas admirably, much better than I could have done myself; I don't pretend he hasn't.

Giboyer — You are too modest.

Maréchal — No, my dear fellow, I am merely just. That young man will go a long ways, — it's me that's telling you, and you can believe me; I'm posted there. I want to attach him to me and charge myself with his fortunes.

Giboyer — Thank you very much, but I have other designs for him: I am taking him to America.

Maréchal — You are taking him?

Giboyer — Yes: I have accepted the conduct of a great paper in Philadelphia, and need the coöperation of Maximilien.

Maréchal — But, good Lord! me too — I need him; I need him worse than you! I have a great position to sustain, a great cause to defend.

Giboyer — You are big enough for that task.

Maréchal — I don't know about that! That young man is extremely useful to me, I don't deny it.

Giboyer — Useful, yes; indispensable, no.

Maréchal — Pardon me! I am used to his way of working, he is used to mine; he completes me, he is my right arm, it's he that holds my pen. I am satisfied with his style and I don't want to change. — And then, I like the boy! I want to form him under my eyes, in my school. Where'll he find an apprenticeship equal to what he'll get with me?

Giboyer — That isn't the question.

Maréchal — Then what is it? Is it about salary? Fix it yourself. What will he earn in America? I'll double it for him.

Giboyer — Good Heavens, sir —

Maréchal — Wants his independence? He shall have it! nobody shall know he belongs to me — I'd just as lieves! See here, if you have the least interest in him, you ought to accept my offers. They are fine!

Giboyer — So fine that I can only excuse my rejection by telling you the whole truth. I am taking Maximilien with me above all to get him abroad, to tear him away from a hopeless love affair.

Maréchal — He is in love? O Lord, the beautiful misfortune! We've all been there, and there we are!

Giboyer — It's not a flirtation, sir: it's a passion.

Maréchal — Who for? a girl he can't marry?

Giboyer — Just so.

Maréchal — What the deuce runs away with these youngsters? [*Aside.*] And my reply speech—day after to-morrow. [*Aloud.*] When do you sail?

Giboyer — To-morrow evening.

Maréchal — Give me a week, anyhow.

Giboyer — Not a day, sir: they are waiting for me.

Maréchal — Hang it! Couldn't there be any means of arranging that cursed marriage?

Giboyer — It is so impossible that I don't even wish it.

Maréchal — Family have their noses 'way up in the air, I suppose? For after all, your nephew is charming in person; he has a magnificent future, a most acceptable present, since I give him — Yes, I'll go as high as twenty thousand francs. Why, devil take it! it's a superb position. What is it those fools must have?

Giboyer — If I told you the young lady's name, you wouldn't insist.

Maréchal — A Montmorency, I conclude?

Giboyer — Better than that, sir! To tell it all in a word, it is Mlle. Fernande.

Maréchal [*very stiffly*] — My daughter? — My secretary permits himself to lift his eyes to my daughter?

Giboyer — No sir, because he is going to America.

Maréchal — Pleasant voyage! She is not meat for him, my dear sir.

Giboyer [*bowing as to take leave*] — I know it. May she be happy with Count d'Outreville.

Maréchal — D'Outreville? Hm — yes! — That's one more obligation I owe you! Everything is broken off, thanks to the attitude you got me to take.

Giboyer [*aside*] — I suspected as much.

Maréchal [*striding about agitatedly*] — My poor child! And the marriage announced, too! the wedding presents bought, the banns published! How can I marry her off at present? And all your fault, sir.

Giboyer [*immovable and cold*] — That rupture was hardly weighing on your mind when I came.

Maréchal — Alas! I counted on my glory to repair the effect. My glory! another heartbreak! You give me over defenseless to the enemies you have made for me! I am the red rag to a

powerful and rancorous party! The jokes will just rain on my silence. I can do nothing but retire from the political scene, and go to planting cabbages. The disaster is complete! the father is compromised even worse than the daughter!

[Sits down at right.]

Giboyer — Pshaw! a rich heiress is never compromised enough not to find a husband.

Maréchal [*dejectedly*] — Yes, some penniless fop who will take her money and make her unhappy.

Giboyer — That's true, you are right — I didn't think of that. A disinterested young man who would marry her for herself — that's a rare bird. And then, supposing you did put your hand on him, your daughter would be relieved from embarrassment — but not you.

Maréchal — Good Lord!

Giboyer — At least, unless your son-in-law had capacity enough to replace my nephew with you; and that can't be found now in the twinkling of a sheep's tail.

Maréchal — Who are you talking to?

Giboyer — Besides, there are enough men already in the secret of your work.

Maréchal — Too many.

Giboyer — How can we get out of this blind alley?

Maréchal [*striking his forehead*] — What dunces we are! why, that shows for itself. [*Goes to fireplace and rings bell.*]

Giboyer [*aside*] — With a little help.

Maréchal [*aside, coming forward*] — It will do me the greatest honor. Besides, I can't do anything else. [*To Servant.*] Ask Mademoiselle to come and speak to me.

Giboyer — You have an idea?

Maréchal — It's never ideas I lack, my dear fellow, it's style. I'm going to astonish you.

Giboyer — What do you think of doing?

Maréchal — Never mind. You'd never guess. Men that conform their words to their acts are rare: I am one. — I am all of a piece, I am — square set: what I think, I say; what I say, I do. •

Giboyer [*aside*] — Queer what a smart fellow I am when the business doesn't concern me.

Enter FERNANDE.

Maréchal — My daughter —

Giboyer [*aside*] — There she is!

Maréchal — I present to you M. de Boyergi, uncle of Maximilien. — Do you know what he has just been telling me now? His nephew's departure for America.

Fernande — Going away? he told me nothing about it.

Giboyer — It is a resolution of this morning, mademoiselle.

Fernande — Won't he come and say good-bye to us?

Giboyer — He has very little time to himself; he charged me with presenting his compliments.

Fernande — Then he does not think us very great friends of his? Tell him, sir, that I should have been glad to take his hand, and that I wish him all the happiness he is so worthy of.

Maréchal — The very question is about his happiness! Do you know the cause of this desperate resolution? The gentleman didn't want to tell me; but they can't hide anything from me. The poor youth is going away to forget you.

Fernande — To forget me? [*To GIBOYER.*] Be assured, sir, that I have not been guilty of any coquetry. Chance alone has bred between us a species of intimacy which I regret profoundly, since there could spring from it for M. Gérard anything but friendship.

Maréchal — That's all well and good, but the harm is done. Ah, well, this distresses me. I set the greatest store by that young man, for my part. He is a boy of rare merit, and an elevation of sentiments rarer still.

Fernande — You do him no more justice than I.

Maréchal — He is poor — so much the better! In short, it depends only on you whether he shall be my son-in-law. [*To GIBOYER.*] You weren't expecting that, hey? [*To FERNANDE.*] Well, do you accept?

Fernande — Yes, father.

Giboyer — Oh, mademoiselle, I will hurry and apprise him —

A Servant [*announcing*] — M. Gérard!

Giboyer — Oh, these lovers! — he was going to leave without seeing you again!

Maréchal [*low*] — Sh! let me do it! [*Sits himself on the fauteuil in the middle of the stage; FERNANDE standing behind him.*] Let him come in!

SCENE VII.

Giboyer [to MAXIMILIEN, who stops, a little confused, on seeing him] — Well, yes, it's I.

Maximilien [to MARÉCHAL] — I see, sir, that I have not to announce my departure to you. I have come to take leave of you and — your family.

Maréchal [pretending severity] — My family, sir, applauds your resolution all the more that she knows the true cause.

Maximilien [to GIBOYER] — What is the meaning —

Giboyer [joyfully] — I have made full confession.

Maximilien — What right had you to give up my secret?

Maréchal — It isn't his fault: I rooted it out of him, if I may venture to express myself so. Ah, my buck, so you permit yourself to love my daughter! There's nothing shrinking about you.

Maximilien — Sir —

Maréchal [rising] — Well! I — I give her to you.

Maximilien — Oh, sir! this chaff—

Giboyer — He isn't chaffing!

Maximilien [in great emotion] — What, sir, you consent! And you, mademoiselle, in spite of my poverty!

Maréchal — Your merit is a fortune.

Maximilien — In spite of my birth!

Giboyer [aside, in consternation] — I forgot that!

Maréchal — Why, what is there in particular about your birth?

Maximilien — Don't you know? I only bear my mother's name.

Maréchal — What! How? No father! [To GIBOYER.] And you didn't say anything about it?

Giboyer — Oh dear! I never thought of it!

Maréchal — You never thought of it, thunderation! you ought to have thought of it. If I defy prejudices, I respect them — and for society —

Giboyer — For society, my nephew is an orphan, and nobody will take the trouble to verify his civil status.

Maréchal — Well, that's a fact. Nobody'll verify it — and then, it's an enormous advantage to marry an orphan. You only have to marry your husband, not his family!

Maximilien — Pardon me, sir: I have my father.

Giboyer [*quickly*] — That's no matter: he has no rights over Maximilien, as he didn't acknowledge him.

Maximilien — If he has no rights before the law, he has them in his heart. Do you understand?

Maréchal [*to GIBOYER*] — Who is this father, anyway? What's he called?

Maximilien — Giboyer.

Maréchal — Giboyer? The biographer, the pamphleteer?

Giboyer [*bowing his head*] — Yes.

Maréchal [*to MAXIMILIEN*] — But, my dear fellow, to such a father you owe nothing before either God or man. You are very lucky that he *hasn't* hobbled you with his name —

Maximilien [*with a burst of feeling*] — It is on that account that he has not acknowledged me, and not to relieve himself of the duties of paternity. He has accomplished *them* with a superhuman abnegation. He has squandered his body and his soul for me. Let him be judged as he may: I am his virtue, and it is not for me to deny him! He has not acknowledged me, but I acknowledge him; for he has legitimized himself by devotion.

Giboyer [*in a trembling voice*] — If he heard you, he would be richly paid! but let him complete his task! Since he has consecrated his life to make yours smooth, do not inflict this sorrow on him, the only one he has never foreseen — that of becoming an obstacle himself; do not refuse him the bitter pleasure of the last sacrifice. [*To MARÉCHAL, in a firm voice.*] I promise you in his name, sir, that he shall disappear, he shall go away — very far.

Maximilien — Where he goes, I will go; it is my duty, it is my joy. I will not separate him from the only man who has the right to surround his old age with respect and kneel beside his death-bed.

Maréchal — Those sentiments do you honor, but they are absurd, a'n't they, M. de Boyergi? [*Walks to center of stage.*]

Giboyer — Yes.

Maréchal — Are you crying? Well, good Lord, do you suppose I'm not feeling emotion myself? I am that! I do justice to that fine fellow, Giboyer, and I'd be very glad to shake hands with him — in a corner; but I can't associate with him when there'll be the devil to pay. [*Walking to the left.*] Don't ask the impossible of me.

Maximilien — I ask nothing, sir.

Maréchal [aside] — That's a common way of getting everything: I know all about it. [*Aloud.*] I give you fair warning I've come to the end of my concessions. Choose between your father, since a father there is -- and my daughter.

Maximilien — But, sir, I have no right even to deliberate.

Giboyer — I beg of you, do not disquiet yourself about him. You do not know those fierce devotions that repay themselves. Come, the sweetest companion you can give to his old age is the thought that you are happy.

Maximilien — The more he would pardon my ingratitude, the less I should pardon myself! — No!

Giboyer [sadly] — Don't let us talk any more about it.

Maréchal [crossly] — Don't let us talk any more about it. Go to America, and much good may it do you! You don't love my daughter, that's all.

Maximilien [falling with a sob on the fauteuil in the center] — I don't love her!

Maréchal [in the doorway] — Come, Fernande. [*FERNANDE, who has followed the whole scene from the rear, advances slowly toward MAXIMILIEN, and taking his face between her hands, kisses him on the forehead. Then she holds her head up and gazes at her father.*] Are you mad? Fine fix I'm in now! You triumph, sir, you are master of the situation; nothing is left for you to do except to escort M. Giboyer into my house and install him in my dressing-gown.

Fernande [to GIBOYER] -- I should be very happy, sir, to have you call me your daughter.

Maréchal — What? is it he?

Fernande — Didn't you guess it?

[*Gives her hands to GIBOYER, who covers them with kisses.*]

Maréchal -- Why, then there's nothing changed in the situation — that I accepted. What I ask of you, M. de Boyergi, is not to change anything in it.

Giboyer — I have no desire to do so.

Maréchal [aside] — I shall have two secretaries instead of one.

Giboyer [aside] — All the same, I shall go to America after the marriage.

A Servant [announcing] -- His Lordship the Marquis d'Au-berive!

SCENE VIII.

Enter the MARQUIS.

Maréchal — Come in, Marquis, and be the first to learn of your ward's marriage.

Marquis [*looking at the lovers*] — To M. Gérard? I oppose it.

Maréchal — Oh! Indeed! You oppose it? By what right? I am my daughter's father, I suppose?

Marquis — Very true, but do you know who this gentleman is?

Fernande — I love him!

Marquis [*aside*] — Balderdash! — But no! [*Aloud.*] Gad! I've wonted myself to the idea that you would marry one of my class, my dear Fernande, and at my age one doesn't change his habits any more. — Young man, you are an orphan — by the resolve of the father of the family; I have no children; I have given you the attentions required by the Code: I adopt you.

Maréchal — Hey?

Giboyer — I thank you from the bottom of my heart, my Lord Marquis.

Maximilien — I too, I thank you very much: but I am not used to having a great many fathers; I have found a good one, and I'll stop there.

Marquis — Take care! It's greatness of soul at Fernande's expense.

Fernande — That nobility is enough for me.

Marquis [*to MARÉCHAL*] — It seems to me you might be consulted a little.

Maréchal — It would be only the proper thing, and I confess I should be enchanted to have my son-in-law — Ah, but no! Ah, but no! I am a democrat.

Giboyer [*aside*] — He thinks he is.

Marquis — Well, since you're all losing your wits — [*Aside.*] I'll adopt my grandson!

THE ESSENCE OF GIBOYER.

A RETORT TO "GIBOYER'S SON."

BY LOUIS VEUILLOT.

(Translated for this work by Forrest Morgan.)

[LOUIS VEUILLOT was the most brilliant French journalist of this century who remained a journalist, and the Ishmaelite champion of reactionism in every part of national life, — religion, politics, and society ; so uncompromising, so thorough-going, and so equally bitter in his assaults on liberal outsiders and the moderates of his own party, that the latter at last had to tie his hands in self-defense. He was born in 1813, the son of a cooper near Orleans, who moved to Paris and set up a small wine-shop when Louis was five, gave the boy a "mutual school" education, and at thirteen put him into a lawyer's office. Here he read bad novels and attended cheap theaters till literary ambition awoke in him ; he set resolutely to work at genuine study and good reading, till at nineteen he got a utility place on a newspaper, and was shortly set to conducting a ministerial journal, where he distinguished himself as a sharp-tongued polemic writer, and fought one duel for politics and another for a theatrical criticism. The same year he went to Perigueux as chief editor of another paper, remained four years, and fought more duels. In 1837 he returned to Paris, and edited other short-lived papers. The next year he took a casual journey to Italy, reached Rome during Holy Week, and saw the Pope. It settled the purpose and action of his career : till then a mere journalistic free-lance, he thenceforth devoted his existence to upholding the papal authority and pretensions doctrinal and practical, like a second Loyola, and the Catholic doctrines *à outrance* against liberty, science, and reason ; with amazing fertility and variety both of idea and expression, keen and venomous wit, and often a note straight from the heart that went to others'. He wrote several religious books the next two years, and even hymns. In 1842 he went to Algeria with General Bugeaud, an experience which produced "The French in Algeria" (1844). On his return he was made head clerk to the Ministry of the Interior ; but after eighteen months left it to take (1843) his most famous position, that of an editor of *L'Univers*, the chief organ of the Clerical party. It was not till 1848 that he became its nominal head, De Caux filling that place ; but his power was felt from the first. *In re* the Cambalot bill for liberty of teaching, he declared mortal war on the universities, and got some months in prison. In 1847 he supported fiercely the cause of the seceding Swiss Catholic cantons, the "Sonderbund." The Revolution of 1848 he first hailed and then fought, like many others not reactionists. He now became more ultra than ever, and disturbed even the mass of his own party by his virulence. At last denouncing even the Catholic prelates who defended the study of the classics, — which he fought as paganizing, — he was reproved and ordered to keep silence on the question by the Archbishop of Paris ; but he went to Rome and gained personal permission from the Pope to continue. The bishops of several dioceses, however, prohibited their clergy from reading his paper. In the burning question of the temporal power of the papacy, 1850–1861, he defended it so bitterly that the paper was suppressed as a public danger ; in a few days it reappeared under the name of *Le Monde*, but Veillot was out, and remained so for six years. He went to Rome again, and was embroiled afresh with the government. Back at the head of the paper in 1867, he had

lost none of his uncompromisingness nor his venom. At the approach of the Eumenical Council of 1869, he redoubled his assaults on lukewarm supporters of papal infallibility, and of the adoption of Pius IX.'s syllabus of eighty heresies as articles of faith; and as a lay attendant at the early sessions of the council was formidable enough to overawe many even of the lower clergy. He continued active for many years after this, and died in 1883. His literary activity was by no means wholly polemic: he wrote very many brilliant sketches of character and life and nature, collected as "*Mélanges*," "*Odors of Paris*," "*The Free-Thinkers*," etc., in numerous volumes; two very readable novels, "*Corbin and D'Aubécourt*" (1850), a religious romance, and "*The Honest Woman*," hardly defined by its title; "*The Plaits*" (1844), short stories, and "*Here and There*" (1859), sketches and impressions; "*The Droit du Seigneur*" (1854), an antiquarian treatise of real value; and others. The one which follows explains itself. In one regard, Augier's attack was certainly unjust: Veuillot was no hireling condottière. A man who serves but one cause for half a century, and that not the one with glory, fortune, or popular applause to offer, serves it as well in its long defeats as its brief triumphs, and as well when abandoned and discredited by its chiefs as when favored and honored by them, — such a man, even though compelled by poverty to take wages, may be anything else one pleases, may be hopelessly in the wrong as to both principles and judgment, but he is assuredly not a mercenary.]

ARGUMENT BY THE AUTHOR.

A SHORT analysis of "Giboyer's Son" is necessary for the understanding of the dialogue which follows. Here it is: —

The Marquis d'Auberive, a more than septuagenarian scapegrace, one of the chiefs of the Legitimist and Catholic party, occupies himself in organizing the *Clerical* party, which is composed of Legitimists, Orleanists, and Imperialists, "united in hate or fear of democracy." He forms at the same time three projects which are linked with his political plan: First, he wants to give a husband to Mlle. Fernande Maréchal, daughter of a Clerical-Voltairian deputy, a rich fool, whose first wife — of whom Fernande is the daughter — he professes to have seduced. Secondly, he wants to give an editor-in-chief to the principal Clerical journal, his personal organ, to replace Déodat, who has just died. Thirdly, he wants to give the Clerical party a dazzling orator, who is to begin by a speech on the Roman question.

For Mlle. Maréchal he designs a poor relation, the young Count d'Outreville, whom he brings expressly from the County, and who is to be his heir. For the paper he designs the illustrious Giboyer, actually employed in the undertaking line and at the theater in Lyons. For the tribune he designs Maréchal, the putative father of Fernande; Giboyer will write his speeches for him, which will be paid extra.

The septuagenarian Marquis sneers at everything: his living friends, his dead mistresses, his political party, his religious party, and even his daughter's happiness and honor; for as soon as he has

seen the husband he intends to furnish her with, he declares him a blockhead and a craven, and that trifle does not hinder him from persisting. In the author's idea, the Marquis is the personification of the old nobility; he is the shadow which augments the resplendence of the new nobility personified in Giboyer, frankly a blackguard, but full of sublime aspirations, wise, eloquent, devoted, — in a word, a democrat, and the ancestor of the future.

Unluckily for the plans of the Marquis d'Auberive, Giboyer has a pseudonymous son, a charming and delicious bastard, born of free love with a folder-girl, and who is beloved by the bastard *Fernande Maréchal*, as ravishing as he. Further, to form and rule the Clerical party the Marquis has procured to assist him an adventuress named the Baroness *Sophie Pfeffers*, and this lady finds the Count d'Outreville such a precious greenhorn that she resolves to marry him.

The Baroness Pfeffers is the feminine pendant to the Marquis d'Auberive. She personifies the ladies of the supreme Catholic aristocracy, the patronesses of pious works, the true heads who according to the author conduct the religious and political intrigues of the Faubourg St. Germain. She has for a reflection in the bourgeois world *Mme. Maréchal*, wife of the Voltairian deputy who is about to become the orator of the Clerical party, thanks to what Giboyer furnishes him. Like her stepdaughter *Fernande*, *Mme. Maréchal* is greatly taken with the young Giboyer, but he scorns her.

The junior Giboyer, pupil of his unknown father, has none but virtuous inclinations. He is the democratic contrast which makes the dull stupidity of the Count d'Outreville — wretched scion of the old nobility, and pupil of *M. de Sainte-Agathe*, assuredly a Jesuit, though he does not call himself one — stand out in relief. As to the deputy *Maréchal*, he represents the Voltairian and Papist, and perhaps the Orleanist and Imperialist, bourgeoisie. In the play he is the only person in whom these diverse opinions can equally concur. At bottom, nevertheless, he is nothing but a democrat; and I do not understand why the author dresses him in yellow, and heaps so many gibes on him, since he is one of his own men. Perhaps he wanted to personify the rare and absurd personage who is called the Opposition deputy.

The love of *Fernande Maréchal*, the secret daughter of the new principle, for the junior Giboyer, a patent product of the same principle, and the ambition of the Baroness Pfeffers, who needs to be a countess, frustrate the combinations of the old Marquis and overthrow all his plans. *Maréchal*, deprived of his position as Catholic orator to the profit of the Protestant *D'Aigremont*, marries his daughter to Giboyer's son, who will write Voltairian speeches for him. Giboyer senior, to whom this marriage assures a living, retires

from the Clerical infamy and returns to the political and religious sentiments natural to him. The Clerical paper no longer has an editor-in-chief, and will find itself suppressed without a decree. The Count d'Outreville is disinherited, and moreover marries the Baroness: a double and just punishment for having been trained by M. Sainte-Agathe. The Marquis d'Auberive will find heirs in the posterity of Giboyer junior. And the democracy, crowned with the flowers of Hymen, and fattened by the dollars of the democracy and the ducats of the aristocracy, triumphs all along the line.

This composition is enhanced by a short preface, written in a singularly heavy, incorrect, and oblique style. The public was indeed surprised, for the dialogue is not lacking in ease, and skips around briskly enough. In this preface the author makes denial on several points. He explains, or rather asserts, that the piece is *social* and not *political*; that "the antagonism of the ancient principle and the modern principle" is its "entire subject"; and that its true title should be "The Clericals," "if that *vocable* (wholly political) were in theatrical currency." In a word, he plays the triply amusing character of a moralist who does not know what he is doing, a politician who does not know what he wants, and an Academician who does not know what he is saying. He has put nothing so truly comic in his entire play, where moreover abound heavy odors, false harmonies, Sardinian honey, and all that is noted as most proper to spoil a feast of wit: —

"Symphonia discors,
Et crassum unguentum, et Sardo cum melle papaver —"

This is the famous "Fils de Giboyer," which is proposed and even imposed for the admiration of the subjects of the S. M. I. As a literary work, no one save Sarcy alone finds it hard to admit that it is poor; as a moral work, there is general agreement that it is sordid; as a political work, it is pretty nearly recognized to be flat. But as a financial speculation, few authors have made out as happily for a long time; and as a work of public disorganization, its efficacy is manifest.

We shall examine it from the triple view-point of literature, morals, and politics. We shall explain why all this shabby, all this bad, and all this ill-bred stuff, crowned with such great success, is not more unworthy of attention; we shall try particularly to discover the strange sources whence spreads a sincere admiration for mediocre and even bad productions. "Giboyer's Son" is a document of some historic value; it deserves a commentary.

I greatly fear I am losing my time. What can morality flatter itself to-day on saying with utility? And above all, what does it matter to the happy father of "Giboyer"? Just now, in the middle of the street, I put myself that question. I found myself in the

midst of a block of vehicles. Hacks, turnouts, dump-carts, were interlocked; it was raining; the mud was splashing over the cumbered pavements. A lady, richly and nobly dressed, jumped out in terror from her barouche, wheel-caught by an omnibus; received a fresh shove, slipped, and fell sprawling in the gutter. Everybody saw it, and the pleasure was general. They laughed at the doors of shops, they laughed in the cabs, they laughed in the interior and on the tops of omnibuses; the street urchins hooted, the flunkeys jubilated, the driver who had given the shove exulted; the police almost alone, fettered by duty, tried to hold in their good humor. The poor lady endeavored to hide her mud and her mortification in a shop; the mob crowded around it, suffocating with laughter. I was witnessing a representation of "Giboyer." What was the use of protesting? What could you say to that guffawing rabble?

No matter! I have nothing to do, and there is no lack in France of unoccupied people like me. "Giboyer" has been given us to look at for a distraction: let us go in there, and hiss as much as permitted.

Let us grant ourselves the pastime of seeing whether these omnibus drivers can blush.

INTERLOCUTORS.

THE MARQUIS, ex-ambassador, aged 71.

M. D'AIGREMONT, former peer of France, aged 60.

M. COUTURIER, ex-deputy, aged 55.

THE COUNT, pontifical soldier, aged 25.

MAXIMILIEN, the MARQUIS' footman.

Scene: A Paris drawing-room.

Marquis — Calm yourself, nephew. I have read this fulminating "Giboyer." It lacks virtue in every sense of the word, including "the current sense." It is nothing but what the "Song of Roland" calls a "baron's blow": there are only two or three months of it.

Count — Two or three months of pillory for honest people, uncle.

Marquis — May they always get off as well, nephew! We pass our days in that pillory! Do you no longer recall being hooted by all the enlightened youth of the County, by reason of your good manners? Weren't you a little discredited for being a member of the Conferences of St. Vincent de Paul, a little deprived of your civil rights for being a soldier of the Pope? You wish to be an upright man, and you aspire to have comedy honor you!

D'Aigremont — Youthful chimeras !

Marquis — My old friends D'Aigremont and Couturier there, Déodat, Mme. de Pfeffers, all my worthy intimates, I have never ceased to view in some pillory, and myself with them. The newspaper, the caricature, the theater, live upon us. Remain a man of spirit, and you will learn to know Giboyer's industries and justices. It is he who hisses us, who hounds on the pit, who brands us with the hot iron of his genius. Unless indeed he is in our houses, as parasite or lackey ; then he flatters us, betrays us, and plunders us. But once more, the Giboyer of the day is not strong and will not go far.

Count — I think you are mistaken, uncle. You haven't seen the spectacle, — the insolence of the stage, the noisy satisfaction of the audience. I came out indignant and afflicted : indignant, for the work is unrighteous ; afflicted, because it is full of wit.

Marquis — Indignation may pass : it is natural at your age. Certain things ought not to find you patient yet. But that the wit which appears in the play should afflict you, gives me pain. It has no wit at all, or I am no longer a judge.

Couturier — You are an excellent judge, Marquis, and yet it has.

Marquis — Tell the marines ! My nephew smells of his province, and my old friend Couturier is one of those serious people whom gross buffoonery surprises and doubles up. They can be amused with puns. You, Couturier, and this little soldier, you are innocents. You let yourself be taken in by the mordant voice of the comedian who makes platitudes vibrate by his grimace which tickles the galleries.

Couturier — Perhaps. In my youth, when managing a household, I always received bad money. At the theater, kicks always made me laugh, and I always cried when the long-lost child recognized its father ; and I have had for a servant this twenty years, under different names and with different faces, the same scamp, without ever recognizing him till after he had robbed me.

Marquis — It was no fault of mine.

Couturier — No. I hear you yet : "Couturier, take care ! you are intrusting your keys to Master Laurent, good Master Tartufe's valet." But how is one to recognize Laurent, when he presents himself under the name of Dubois ? Oh, I confess my weaknesses. As one of my old political friends said, I let myself be taken in by all the regular tricks. For all that, I

have noticed in "Giboyer" many sharp-pointed phrases, that fly to the target and stick there like barbed arrows.

Marquis — As to phrases, everybody has made them, and every author picks them up. In a comedy, I want to see comic traits. Here there are phrases — not many! And of those few, a large part are picked up. He is a picker-up, this archer of yours.

D'Aigremont — Reclaimer, Marquis. He takes his own wherever he finds it.¹

Marquis — Then his wealth is made up of skillful reclamation. I know where he reclaimed it from. Once a month I make a purchase of a few bundles of the minor journals. You know only one of them, often more literary and more courageously sensible than the great press: I know half a dozen. I see there whence the wit of the Athenians comes. Despite some flashes of sprightliness, it is hideous: it smells of the shoe in holes, the drink, the shameful hunger, and all the rest. Your man, my dear Couturier, fishes in that pond. Out of this tinsel and these odors he astonishes the good company. It mounts to the nose, it tingles, and they say, "It is very strong!" At the other end of the Palais-Royal, this style no longer rouses wonder: the vaudeville and the farce abuse it. Most of those fine phrases you speak of did not pass before me for the first time, by any means; but I abstained from bowing to them, because they are disreputable acquaintances.

D'Aigremont — Come, Marquis, you make me wish to play devil's advocate! Our author picks up in good places also, — he has read our friend Déodat. When Giboyer reveals his hidden glory, he announces that he has written a book "beautiful and true," of which he is proud, which he will not sign out of respect to the work. He adds, "If I will not sign my book, why should you expect me to sign my boy!" The phrase was found in "The Free-Thinkers," and Giboyer does not quite spoil it. But even when he merely draws water from the tub, how he filters and how he colors! The angelic Maximilien Giboyer, disengaging his democratic father from clerical servitude, says to him, putting his hand on his forehead: "I don't want you to debase any longer the great mind that is there. — My old friend, how you must have suffered vilifying your noble ideas in that *crabs' newspaper*! Quit it, I beg of you, — so that the gentlemen of the committee will have *noses a foot long* when

¹ Molière's famous defense when accused of plagiarism.

they wake up. How delightful to *waft away* their *slugger!*" You will admit there is delicacy here, and a fine patchwork of various old gags.

Marquis — And the true style of a young gentleman, distinguished by the expression as by the elevation of his sentiments! It is easy to understand the general favor with which the youthful Giboyer, the illegitimate son of a folder-girl, is the object, not alone in Maréchal's house, but up to the aristocratic drawing-room of the Baroness Sophie Pfeffers.

Couturier — Come, come, gentlemen, won't you accord anything to our Aristophanes? For, after all, he is Aristophanes, since Paris is Athens.

Marquis — Excellent Aristophanes of that Athens! Scribe was its Menander, and Ponsard its Sophocles. We are fine! Nevertheless, since an Aristophanes there is, I acknowledge one merit in our Aristophanes.

Couturier — Good. It becomes the vanquished to be just. Come, Marquis, describe the conqueror's merit.

Marquis — Guess it. I wish to check my impressions by yours.

Couturier — Observation?

Marquis — Nowise.

D'Aigremont — Invention?

Marquis — Not at all.

Count — Faith! as you have denied him wit and style already —

Marquis — Wit almost; style absolutely.

Count — Then do you accord him courage?

Marquis — Ah no, not that! not even audacity. Do you remember those police vocalists who dishonored the human voice and the street by bellowing out songs against Lamoricière?

Count — Yes, I remember them.

D'Aigremont — In fact, you owed them twenty-four hours in the lock-up.

Count — And you, sir, the trouble of getting me out of it, which was no small matter.

Couturier — It was your first stage on the road to Castelfidardo: ¹ I do not commiserate you.

Marquis — Nor I, though he came near never returning.

¹ The battle of September 18, 1860, which put an end to the temporal power of the Pope, the Italians under Cialdini defeating the Papal troops under the French general Lamoricière.

Count — Nor I, uncle, though I did not remain there.

Marquis — Well, boy, these drunken rhapsodists that dared to insult the old African in a city full of his former comrades — a city once proud of his glory and not long ago saved by him — had they at least this low species of courage? Not a whit. They had their effrontery and a permission. All those who could feel the outrage had swallowed it without breathing a word.

Couturier — You don't mean it was just swagger?

Marquis — I say it was so. It needed the hare-brained skull of this little fanatic to conceive the illegal thought of oppressing one of Lamoricière's insulters. The insulter yelled for the guard; the sergeants snapped up the fanatic and ran him into the guard house. The case of the hunter¹ is similar: it is even more secure. He attacks only society, and he has his shooting license properly made out. No public prosecutor to fear, no comedy against him possible, no reprisals. At most a few pamphlets, which will help do his own work by keeping up the noise. Thus there is glory, money, security, and in addition, I presume, the peace of a good conscience: this is a soldier of ideas whom I do not see under the aspect of a hero.

Couturier — It is not like Molière or Beaumarchais.

Marquis — Yes indeed, it is just the same, minus the genius of Molière and the diabolic talent of Beaumarchais. Molière knew his court. Under pretext of assaulting hypocrites, he traduced the malcontents. He was given Louis XIV. for collaborator; he had Condé for ardent patron. Louis XIV. at that time was rather tired of the devotees, who busied themselves too much over Mme. de Montespan; Condé was playing free-thinker.

Couturier — Which does not prove that all free-thinkers are heroes.

Marquis — It is you who say that. Having made submission to the king, the former rebel amused himself by heckling God. Louis, on his part, readily treated as political opposition the overstrained devotion which blamed the prince's amusements. The good Catholic of the moment, the "sincere but independent" Catholic of 1662 to 1669, ought to admit public adultery, as to-day he ought to desire the annexation of the Papal States. Molière wrote his skit against the devotees; namely, "Tartuffe." Later he wrote one directly in favor of annexation; namely, "Amphitryon."

¹ *Giboyeur* means a professional huntsman — hence, social free-lance.

Couturier — Curious likeness between Molière and an illustrious modern : both victims of anti-conjugal annexation, both determined annexationists ! Fine subject for a comedy — which will not be written.

Marquis — Molière had much likeness to all sorts of people who remain far below him. No one practiced more skillfully the pretended new art of the *puff*. The preparation of “Tartufe” was the work of a master in this line. He showed half of it, he tried it on society and the court ; never was a work in child-bed accompanied by such uproar. The devotees cried out, — the “heart devotees,” — as to-day honest people do, while the true Giboyers keep still. Molière called it calumny, invoked the King, invoked Condé, invoked the papal legate, averred that he was seeking only the interest of Heaven. In his heart he was laughing at everybody. “Quite sure of having not one of his masters against him,” says his commentator Bret, “he did not lose courage.” At last the piece was represented, and the author gave himself the pleasure of adding a preface, a masterpiece of wit and impertinent hypocrisy, in which he boasts of having rendered the greatest service to the cause of God, despite the respectable blindness of the true devotees who misunderstand its nature. He pretends to rely on the Fathers of the Church ; he cites M. de Corneille, and puts “Tartufe” in the same rank with “Polyeucte.” If we could only be laughed at to-day in such good prose ! Alas ! poor Molière, poor great artist, dying without sacraments, in a player’s gown ! His libel still endures. Tartufe, become a priest of Reason, demonstrates every day to Orgon, become a thinker, that Scapin was the most pious of apostles.

Couturier — One moment, my Lord Marquis ! If that arrow is for me, I declare it unrighteous. I let myself be taken in by all sorts of tricks ; but I have never believed that the good shopkeepers who demand “Tartufe,” and the good actors who play it, were trying to hearten themselves up to take the Easter sacraments.

Marquis — My dear Couturier, all the wit in the world cannot preserve honest people from a certain credulity ; otherwise too many people would die of hunger. But there is a certain depth of silliness in credulity to which only the incredulous descend. It is in those that is venerated Saint Poquelin, prophet and martyr of the true piety.

D'Aigremont — I confess that I have never admired the

courage of Molière, any more than his depth as a moralist. He is a very adroit courtier, and a skillful observer of surfaces. If you sound him a little, you shortly come to find the tufa. He turned back equally where he saw that his masters were against him, and where the true depth of the human soul opened before him.

Marquis — Let us recognize also that the dramatic author, especially the comedian, is essentially a hampered person. He has always masters to satisfy, always an audience to attract. Justice exacts that we should not demand from him either too much virtue nor too much philosophy.

Count — But, gentlemen, Beaumarchais? If you tell me he was a scapegrace, I shall not rebel. A man of merit has written two fat volumes on his account, very amusing, which sufficiently make him out that. But at least here is a bold scapegrace, who pays with his hide. How he places himself in the open field, how he forms his sole person into a hollow square, everywhere bristling with darts, firing from every quarter!

Marquis — And firing on everything, — on the family, on marriage, on justice, on religion, on the nobility; no base of social order is spared.

Count — Well, uncle, that proves at least his audacity.

Marquis — No, nephew. It very simply demolishes your panegyric. When a society receives full in its face, I will not say such lessons, — it takes other lips to give lessons, — but such slaps, the man who delivers them risks nothing: that society has reached its term, and is making haste to perish. It applauds whoever shakes its decrepitude with a more pitiless arm, and rushes toward the abyss at a madder pace. The first edition of the “Marriage of Figaro” contains one particularly deadly feature, which is not the author’s: that is the approbation of the censorship. “Nothing contrary to laws or morals,” says the censorship, hissed itself like all other institutions. So your brilliant scapegrace had no need of so much hardihood. He was a very different thing from Sir Caron de Beaumarchais: he was the mob already triumphant, already dancing over the ruins. • Count Almaviva, Countess Rosine, Judge Brid’oison, Citizen Bartholo, Churchman Basile, take hold of hands in an impious round. Figaro, the bastard, product, agent, minister, and victim, but not the innocent victim, of their corruptions, pitches the key of the tune and leads the dance. The democracy is born.

Couturier — Ah, that is quite true, Marquis. I had not thought of that. Figaro is Giboyer, the first of the name. I thought the type rather new, and I said —

D'Aigremont — You said to yourself, "Where have I seen that before?"

Couturier — Precisely.

Marquis — Yes, Beaumarchais, the eldest son of Voltaire, is the own father of Giboyer. Our contemporary has not the honor of that creation. I will render him justice, nevertheless: he has appropriated the treasure-trove loyally. He has not unmarked the linen, as was said of one of his illustrious rivals: he has made holes in it, crumpled it, dirtied it, and rendered it his own by that labor, as natural as adroit. Thus he has satisfied the brutality of the present taste, he has made *realism*, and honestly put his mark on the object borrowed. Giboyer is Figaro grown old, but as he should grow old: filthy, heavy, imbruted by the logic of his ways. From the journal he has fallen to journalism; he was only unbelieving, he is impious; he was only impudent, he is cynical; he intrigued, now he serves, and in serving betrays; he let himself be paid, now he puts himself up for sale. He tumbles without an effort to ridiculous and odious trades, — mute, ticket-seller, purveyor of speeches pro and con. Formerly husband of the natty Suzanne, now lover or seducer of a folder-girl, whom he leaves at the corner of the wall with her baby. In a word, he escapes ignobleness on no side. Filthy, sluttish, smelling of a pipe; formerly a guttersnipe, now a sot. This progress of his degradation is very observable. The oddity is to have made of this very Giboyer a Platonician and a mystic.

D'Aigremont — What would you have? There must be a little of the ideal too. That ingredient is of prime necessity. Realism does not dispense it, but no more can it dispense with it. A fine metaphysical subject: necessity and love for the true, impracticability and distaste for the true; and these two contraries permanent and imperious in man! Religion makes the great harmony for the *soul*: art should operate in the things of the mind. But art is faithful or rebellious, pure or corrupted. Faithful and pure, it takes the true and transfigures it into the beautiful; rebellious, — that is, corrupted, — it takes the true and disfigures it into the ignoble; it seeks there for its type, which is extreme degradation. Only, arrived at that limit, it perceives one thing: that is, that the *realized* work is no longer

interesting, no longer living, no longer possible ; it fails of the miserable goal it tends to, the absolute glorification of the absolute bad. Human nature revolts ; all the moral puissances, awakened and insulted, repulse the creation of ignominy. The low blackguards who have attained their fullness of depravation are not merely altogether repulsive to see : experience discloses that they are altogether mischievous, and that they become altogether stupid. All intelligence is extinguished in the sot. We are intimate with them, these Giboyers, those who have written and those who have read ! Many a time have we visited their hopeless slums ; many a time have we found them drunk, sleeping off the alms they have just wrung from us for their families who are a prey to hunger. Setting on these brutes to pillage is easy, and our dwellings are known to them. But to erect them into a legitimate argument against society, and present them as the founders of a new and better order, there was no means ! The drunken slave can only create disgust with drunkenness. What was to be done ? Then was invented the stupid and immoral procedure of supposing in these living sewers, not alone heroic virtues, but all the delicacies of a soul the most vigilant to keep itself pure ; and that without the grace of God, without recourse to God, but on the contrary with ignorance, hate, or contempt of God ! To make them walk in the firmest path of virtue, all the while remaining in mire up to their necks, it is enough they should have what Giboyer calls a *turlutaine* [hobby].

Couturier — Tur —

D'Aigremont — Turlutaine, tur-lu-taine.

Couturier — My Lord Marquis, do you know this tongue ?

Marquis — Turlutaine is the same thing as *toquade*. Toquade is "played out," and no longer in use this six months. In old French, in *ganache* [old-fogy] French, we say a *manie* or a *folie*. Giboyer's turlutaine is paternal love : a turlutaine, he says, "which is as well worth while as a snuff-box collector's." It pleases him "to be a dunghill and fertilize a lily."

D'Aigremont — Yes. After having forgotten his folder-girl's boy six years in the gutter, the polluted Giboyer is all at once seized with paternal love. An unlikely turlutaine if ever there was one ! But he really is seized. And suddenly, without reforming his nasty life in any way, he becomes an archangel. He becomes a great philosopher, great politician, great writer, and does not for all that cease blackguardizing more

and more ; but the more the man blackguardizes, the more the archangel shines out. This singular partnership of tramp and archangel subsists twenty years in perfect accord. Each transacts his business separately ; the archangel without cleaning up the tramp ; the tramp without depluming the archangel. Marvelous effect of a turlutaine, more marvelous than all the miracles of the Golden Legend ! With twenty years of mud accumulated on an old ground-soil already rich, Giboyer has not been able to submerge his genius. On the contrary, this peripatetic dunghill whence a lily springs is also the combustible which feeds the beautiful and clear flame of thought ; and even while counting his tickets, our rogue has written the gospel of the coming world.

Couturier — Do you know, my friend, you are telling one of Balzac's novels there — some Vautrin or other that I turned over some time or other ? This Vautrin, policeman, thief, clever murderer, old convict, famous wit besides, cherishes also the paternal turlutaine, and equally produces a son beloved by the ladies. But I do not recall whether Vautrin manufactured a gospel.

D'Aigremont — That might happen. Nevertheless Balzac's genius must have saved him from that vice. Giboyer as reformer of Christian society — that is something that might pass for its audacity ; it is a slap, not at the Clerical party, but at all society and the morality of all times, and at the special good sense of the audience. The audacity of outrage, the audacity of the absurd. But not at all ! society as a whole either considers it very good and renders itself an accomplice in the outrage it undergoes, or thinks it very aged and cares no more about it. It is surfeited with this personage of honorable infamy, who for twenty or thirty years, by the general law of modern progress, has replaced the former virtuous criminal, grown tiresome. Giboyer is Figaro crossed with Marion Delorme. Virginity remade ! M. Hugo as much as Beaumarchais is the literary ancestor of our writer.

Marquis — My dear D'Aigremont, you have come very little short of dispensing me from explaining what sort of merit I recognize in the play and the author.

D'Aigremont — Well, my friend, finish out.

Marquis — Not yet, if you please ; but I foresee that we shall be of the same opinion. For the moment, permit me to observe that if the author of "Giboyer" does really descend from

Beaumarchais and Victor Hugo, it is conformably to that law of modern progress you speak of: the descendant of two great artists is only a heavy-handed workman.

Couturier — Come, come! allow him wit.

Marquis — If you push me to the wall, my dear *Couturier*, I should say he is a mason. He has just what wit is needed to be the cleverest man in France for a certain time, in a certain quarter. You have to know his tongue, you have to be of his quarter. He has already less wit when you have crossed from the right bank to the left; he leaves considerably more of it on the thresholds of the fine houses; pass the fortifications and the slump is disastrous. Imagine a reader capable of enjoying the favor of La Fontaine, Mme. de Sévigné, or Le Sage, but who should have lived at Meaux for a dozen years: what would he find in it? Impertinences often unintelligible. Put it under the eyes of a woman of wit and honor, and she would be simply revolted.

Couturier — Marquis, you must have some special theory of wit — some superannuated theory.

Marquis — What would you have? I was born old, and I believe I am growing old still. To my notion, wit is a gift of seeing and speaking justly, but speaking justly in a continual soaring of the imagination that colors, that animates, that creates originality while guarding simplicity. It is the style, the substance of spontaneity and wisdom, out of which Mme. de Sévigné makes her letters, La Fontaine his fables, Molière his dialogue, Montaigne his rambling. That substance, that exquisite substance, these pickers-up never pick up; and among those who are called people of wit, many cannot even discern it. It is not the utterance, it is not the sparkle nor the flash of fire nor the sting; it is the grace and flower of intellect, more delicious than elsewhere in Mme. Sévigné, because of her perpetual blossoming out of honest joy. Do not confound simpering, grimace, and fard with the sparkle of health on a charming visage! True wit rejects tinsel, it does not allow itself to be embittered by hate. A bedizened bottle dishonors good wine, an addition of alcohol spoils it. Good wit and good wine have enough in their laughing robe and their wholesome warmth.

Couturier — My Lord Marquis, ought I at once to burn half my library and empty half my cellar? How many pearls will you leave me in the two caskets?

Marquis — Why, my friend, I do not scorn inferior qualities, second growths. Among these second growths of wit we count La Bruyère, Regnard, Le Sage, and others. There are honorable places there! And you can descend as far as M. Paul de Kock and Surennes wine.

Couturier — I breathe again.

Marquis — See my breadth. I make a third category for mixtures and hybrids; mixtures more or less happy, hybrids more or less approaching the superior race.

Couturier — And my author?

Marquis — Fourth and last category: that of fabrications, manipulations, and chemical products. There are minds like artificial wines. You give them strength, froth, a certain bad fieriness. There is more or less of wine in them, and more or less of drugs. I place your man there, at a certain glorious distance from M. Legouv   and all that is “immediately below nothing.”

Couturier — You are paying him a compliment!

Marquis — I am rendering him justice. Be assured his own conscience will not protest. An author who has resolved to make a “social piece” deliberately classifies himself in the ranks of manipulators. Study the character and aim of the social and democratic comedy: it is the same thing as democratic and social wine, and all that bears those two epithets of the time. This comedy is not made with heart-throbs, nor this wine with grape; and the manufacturer knows he is working for the pot-house. As for the rest, the sale is assured. These chemical brewages, these *potions*, enrich the producer, and are of great importance from the political point of view. The people won’t fuddle itself with anything else.

Couturier [to the COUNT] — Well, Zouave, what do you say?

Count — And yet, after all, I wish I knew what it is I like in “Giboyer”; for positively I do like something in it. After seeing the piece, I read it. I was dissatisfied with myself for feeling a core of admiration —

D’Aigremont — Oh!

Count — On my word, yes; a core of admiration for a work which at the same time I felt to be false and condemnable. It would have pleased me to have it bad at all points. I thought myself under the spell of the acting. Those fellows are in the trade, and it isn’t a pretty trade. What faces the women have, especially! There are young ones among them, though.

Couturier — They know how to make a face that never wrinkles.

Count — Then I recalled an axiom of my professor of rhetoric : In the matter of plays, he told us, the good ones can't be played, the bad ones can't be read. I submitted "Giboyer" to the test of reading.

Marquis — Well ?

Count — Well, it didn't make me weary. It is lively, bustling, swift ; nothing lingers. None of the personages hang fire in what they want to say, nothing drags ; you can read it all aloud —

Marquis — When you have taken care to send away the ladies.

Count — To be sure ; but the class being given — ?

Marquis — I don't pretend the author does not know how to work. His machine is skillfully mounted, its grooves slide, its doors open and shut, its people enter and leave—they don't converse, but they chatter ; in a word, the artificial wine makes the cork pop to perfection. It is the dexterity of Scribe, with a little of the art of Beaumarchais. I will wait a few years, till you have more experience of life and good writings : then you can judge of the drawing and the coloring.

Couturier — Do you surrender, Count ?

Count — I am beaten ; if a treaty is proposed to me, I will accept it.

Couturier — As for me, I stick. This work pleases me ; I find it in the fashion. Crinoline, fard, comb-play, nose in the air, saucy eye —

Marquis — All that makes a quarter of an hour's pleasure. But imagine all that to-morrow morning, after the ball, in broad daylight ? Picture to yourself all that make-up as a fourth at the Judgment of Paris.

D'Aigremont — The idea is good. I have dreamed of that terrible justice of confrontation. The author has ventured to compare himself with Molière, just as Molière ventured to compare "Tartufe" with "Polyeucte" : I would have liked to induce him to read his piece in public, as Molière did — but I should have selected the drawing-room audience. Imagine "Giboyer's Son" at Mme. Swetchine's, when Lacordaire, Donoso Cortès, Dom Guéranger, the Abbé Dupanloup, Berryer, Montalembert, Falloux, were to be found there. Picture to yourselves, around the mistress of the quarters, that circle of

women so elevated and so sweet, who pilfered her wisdom and her virtue. The reading is ended, not without the author having sweated great drops, as frightened as Macbeth before the ghost of Banquo. We are at the judgment. What astonishment on all sides ! I hear the Duchess de la R—— ask for the translation of *turlutaine* ; I see the Countess Sophie Swetchine, in her compassion, trying to shield the caricaturist of the Baroness Sophie Pfeffers. But what is yet to depict is the affright of the comic eagle in the midst of those Clericals, who displume him by judicious strokes of the beak, and finally expel him, so stripped that the unpublished volume of Giboyer senior would not suffice to reclothe him with down.

Marquis — Note that the scene would be the same in the less elevated zones of the Spirit of '89. Imagine only among the auditors M. Guizot, M. Thiers, M. de Barante, M. de Rémusat, M. Cousin, M. Duchâtel, M. Vitet, M. Villemain : you see at once how the author would sustain his personage. Without any one objecting a word, he would feel it flattened out, sent back to the vaudeville. I say that in all places where obscenity and buffoonery are not in fashion, he would be ill at ease and ask to depart.

Couturier — Hang it, I'd like to give myself a little of that comedy ! Gentlemen, you no longer have before you the Clerical bourgeois prig, Pierre François Couturier. Of ancient principles, a fortune honestly gained in business and some experience in public affairs have disturbed my natural uprightness. It seemed to me very simple that men of a given period, having undergone the same experiences, should act together in defense of possessions diverse, it is true, but established on the same soil and equally endangered. What does it matter, I said, that one prefers his field, another his manufacture, another his garden, another his steeple : all ought to combat the plague that menaces all. I have changed, gentlemen. Giboyer has lent me his manuscript book. I have not read it : the mere odor that exhales from it has revealed to me a publicist stronger than Bonald, Joseph de Maistre, and Donoso Cortès, and perhaps comparable to Guérault. What a pipe ! All my past convictions have vanished in this perfume of the future. I no longer believe that the old religion, the old morality, the old fashion of having one wife and heirs, can serve henceforth for the base of the social order. The society that reposes on them is corrupt and barbarous : corrupt, barbarous, and imbecile

the old Couturier, who dreamed of maintaining the ruinous monarchical and Christian edifice! I abjure that Couturier; I abolish him; I take a title of nobility which will efface Montmorency, Guizot, and Magenta. I am the citizen Gibaugier, chamberlain of the new ideas; I bear azure with three golden bladders, placed two and one.

Marquis — Excellent blazon! Two comedians for support, and it will lack nothing.

Count — But why three bladders?

Marquis — The first for picaresque comedy, the second for social comedy, the third for the comedy of virtue: for we still hold to that article — which is paid extra.

Couturier — Having become a lily, — at the roots, — I make myself the champion of my new fathers and my new faith. Come, men of the past, come: old fogies, what do you say against those you ought to bless? A moralist is braving the perils of the theater with the generous design of purifying your manners and quickening up your laggard minds. You attack him. Whatever you have said, know first that I honor his courage. Against two coalesced old parties, he defends two weaknesses: that of the government and that of the democracy.

D'Aigremont — Oh, not at all! According to Giboyer, the old parties are a *legion of colonels without regiments, a staff without troops* [jokes of long standing]; *the day of a serious enrollment*, they will find themselves beating the roll-call in the desert, which signifies that they will raise nothing; then the democracy has nothing to fear. And as *those fellows are formidable only to the governments they uphold*, the government they do not uphold has no need of reinforcements against them. All the more it may wish for a vengeance — which your author can make shift to procure for it.

Couturier — Well, my author protects your very selves. He places in safety from your deplorable victories the present that saves you and the future that will transfigure you.

Marquis — Nay, not at all! As to victories, the Clericals cannot win any, that has just been established. As to the advantages which the present and the future assure them, the present does not save them even from the insults and libels of your moralists; the future promises them nothing agreeable, if it is to transfigure them into Giboyers.

Couturier — What! that Giboyer so courageously infatuated

with the noblest of turlutaines — you don't find him at bottom full of adorable virtues !

D'Aigremont — He is certainly the virtuous hero of the play ; but after all he is an open blackguard, and we are not yet used —

Couturier — You'll get used. That is precisely the great and holy work of the democratic muse. Democracy will efface all soilments, as it will break all chains.

Marquis — Ah ! might the unchained hurry and take a bath ! Do you expect it ?

Couturier — We are sure of it. Besides, if Giboyer offends you, you know he is reserved for America. Your scruples have been foreseen and provided for. The type is Maximilien. Isn't he charming at every point, that young Giboyer — isn't he in truth a lily ?

D'Aigremont — Delicious, fresh, pure, endowed with a facility of opinion and a taste for cigars that make it easy to divine his unknown father in him ; accommodating on the subject of family, accepting father, stepfather, grandmother, absolutely as they are given to him ; son of Giboyer, son of everybody. Impossible to present us with a democratic pill more sweet to swallow ! But what will become of him, that amiable child who finds himself suddenly overwhelmed with so many parents and so large an independence, for the sole merit of having refuted between midnight and six in the morning an opinion he had held from noon till six in the evening ? Has he a character ? Does he offer a guaranty ? I see in him only a Giboyer better kept, so long as he has not squandered his estate. Do you know the Count d'Outreville seems to me of quite another stamp, and is truly the noble young man and the hero of the occasion ?

Couturier — It is my turn to say “ Not at all ! ” What, this Carpentras sexton, this novice with the flat locks, this virgin simpleton, who “ has a frank appearance — a counterfeit franc ! ”

D'Aigremont — Another fine phrase that was lying around loose. But let us argue. Strip off the base mimicry and histrionism, and the sexton is only a provincial innocent. His sole inferiority to Giboyer's son is in not having yet found a tailor, not having yet “ lost the holy ignorance of evil,” and still believing in God. In all that, there is no irreparable vice. The aristocratic sexton hesitates to ally himself with the ridicu-

lous Maréchal, but his pride would be honored by an alliance with Cathelineau; a sufficiently modern sentiment for a son of the Crusaders. All Fernande's dowry does not lead him to shut his eyes to the democratic leanings of that knowing young girl; he resists the despotic and furthermore stupid insolence of the Marquis d'Auberive, who wishes to make him marry her at all hazards—he does not know how to pretend love. When Maréchal has turned traitor, he withdraws; when love has come, he throws himself headlong, disdaining the Marquis' fortune, into the snares of a coquette in whom he fancies all the virtues. So the sexton is neither so false, nor so greedy, nor so mean-spirited. He will rub off his verdancy and get dressed. Give him a week to take on the Paris air, the *urbana frons*, and he will crush your Giboyers. As a sincere Christian he dominates them by all the loftiness of his origin and all the dignity of his beliefs; as a free-thinker, practicing all your large maxims, the advantage of his blazon remains with him,—and the young Giboyer may regret having carried off Fernande from him.

Couturier — Oh, tek! 'sh!

D'Aigremont — Faith, my dear M. Gibaugier, I assure you I won't answer for anything! Fernande holds to the religion of the future, in which I see no resource against temptations. Are your democratic heroes and heroines made of wood? Have they never any but virtuous "turlutaines"? The young Giboyeress is pure, I don't know exactly why; but that lily too has a dunghill in its roots, and a big one! and she is curious and bold! and for a girl of seventeen, she soon gets used to kissing a youth who comes along!

Couturier — She has to compromise herself to end the play.

D'Aigremont — I don't say no, but she is not sparing of it. What decision! Unless the triumphant young Giboyer should be always amiable and always please her, I don't guarantee Fernande for a year. You see, M. Gibaugier, for a woman to stumble it isn't necessary she should have been educated at a convent, nor belong to the Altar Society. She can slip just as disastrously in libraries, when she goes there all alone to find a young secretary, to ask him for books he would give his sister. Thus Mlle. Julie d'Étanges [Rousseau's], one of the innumerable ancestresses of Fernande, ends by entanglement with a Bohemian called St. Preux, own cousin to the junior Giboyer. For no more is she a first-hand invention, this engaging Fer-

nande! And that a lily may obtain its whiteness and its perfume, dear M. Gibaugier, it is not enough that its roots are plunged in a rich dunghill: it is still necessary for the pure sky and the brilliant sunshine to stream over its head. As to the dunghill around your lilies, there is one, God protect us! Giboyer, Auberive, Maréchal — that is to say, vagabondage, cynical adultery, ignominious betrayal — there's fatness! But the pure sky and the vivifying sun that shed color and aromas, where are they? I see no other planet above these young plants than the pipe of the elder Giboyer. Your lilies are fat, but pale and inodorous.

Couturier — M. d'Aigremont, you are sixty; you are not posted on this any longer. Let us take a more competent judge of the girl's proud character. What do you think of Fernande Maréchal, my Lord Count?

Count — In truth, you embarrass me. On the stage I do not see women, I only see actresses — beings almost chimerical, and who have no existence for me outside of that place, where I regard them with a certain sorrowful curiosity. She who represents Fernande Maréchal is fine in her species. I had not thought at all that she could be a character, a soul, a person in short, and I had never asked myself whether I should like her or should not like her. What did it matter? She is totally outside the world where I shall seek my wife. Daughter of an ancient house, or bourgeois, or peasant, my wife will certainly be nothing that resembles that. I know no more about Fernande's character than if the actress had pantomimed and danced it. Nevertheless, one word gave me a curious shock. When Fernande learns that her Giboyer is decamping and will find himself without a place, she exclaims, "*I have taken away his bread!*" The speech seemed to me ignoble, and the opposite of all that delicacy and affection ought to suggest. "*I have taken away his bread!*" I don't know why, but I affirm that a woman does not love and never will love a man she reproaches herself with such a wrong toward, and whose lot can inspire her with such an anxiety. His *bread!* Is she proposing to feed him? Does she suspect him of thinking of that? The cry is of a finished vulgarity! If the young Giboyer heard it, and did not disaffection himself on the instant, I should hold him for the most arrant whiffet that ever went heiress-hunting. Your Fernande has the instincts of a sales-girl. And when M. d'Aigremont tells us that she is an

inodorous lily, I do not find her so : this lily fertilized by a dunghill — has an odor of soil.

Marquis — That's it.

Count — I add that the author places his lovers in very unwholesome and anti-poetic conditions. Giboyer, Maréchal, the old Auberive — what guardian angels around these young people ! what putrefaction of sentiments and language ! what perspectives, in a word ! Fernande would be no sooner married than the septuagenarian rake would be telling her juicy stories ; Maréchal would multiply mean stupidities ; and Giboyer, still noble, would bring into the drawing-room his pipe, his turlutaines, and his gutter-slang. The first sentiment your gracious bastards must hold in common will be the utterest contempt for all they know of fathers and relatives. In this regard, the play offers a spectacle as profoundly disgraceful as profoundly immoral. The elders there are made hail-fellows, put to rights, laughed at, by the juniors, and all shocking either for cynicism or silliness. And as nothing proclaims that Maximilien Giboyer will drive them out, it is easy to foresee that the house will promptly become a sewer — fit to bear lilies.

Marquis — Bravo, Zouave ! What do you say of it, M. Gibaugier ?

Couturier — *I like to see how you teach him !* This poor young fellow is more backward than yourself, if possible ; he will never enjoy the graces and liberties of the democratic household. But I should have thought him better disposed to taste our literature. You change your tune very promptly, my little Count : at the beginning of this conversation you found us good.

Count — If I found you good, or rather attractive, I found you also false, and even repugnant. I perceive of myself that scrutiny is not favorable to you. I rejoice at it ; for this lively noise and this optical illusion with which I was half charmed, weighed on my conscience. In proportion as I emancipate myself from it, your success gives me less fear. I begin to find that really it isn't very powerful. I begin to believe that public reason and good sense will prevail. This animated pamphlet is nothing but an irritating centipede ; it has no muscles, no bony structure, no head. It will be put feet up, and that will end it. But, gentlemen, since we have undertaken the investigation of the characters, let us finish, please. This method goes to the spot. Uncle, what do you think of the Marquis d'Auberive ?

Marquis — I knew him intimately. He was an old relative of mine. Rich, bored, debauched, in youth; impious in tone, to imitate the men of letters he fed, admired, and despised; nonentity at bottom, with manners dignified enough. He was called Count Almaviva [Beaumarchais']. When the Revolution broke out, he missed the chance to redeem his past life : he had no point of honor to fight for, and it was not made a point of honor to guillotine him. He wore a sort of red cap, the least dirty he could find, hid under a carmagnole a little money he had saved, and was able to crouch low enough to make himself forgotten. This gentleman deserved to be a democrat; he was seen in Barras' drawing-rooms. Later he became chamberlain, and I know not what besides, and chevalier of honor to some queen or other, who nevertheless ejected him. About the time of this catastrophe, a little previous, he was captured, conspiring with some white and red boobies, the former almost honest, the latter altogether rogues. In this fine company he held a midway position. A taste of prison covered his carmagnole and his livery. In 1816 he proclaimed himself a martyr. To his old defects he added the most intolerable aristocratic arrogance and a victor's swagger. The triple fool believed himself the restorer of monarchy and religion, and maintained an unembarrassed demeanor toward his two clients. He had always his same clan of scattered and battered conspirators, wherein many blacklegs introduced themselves. All this gang plundered and laughed at him. Giboyers were not lacking there : white Giboyers, red Giboyers, Giboyers changing color at will or wearing two colors at once. He counted on these athletes to hoist himself into the ministry, and apply at last his ideas of government, — a mixture, a mess, a *detritus* of all the doctrines that ignorance, conceit, and fear had introduced into a brain where nothing entered whole and nothing stood upright. Aristocrat and democrat, Voltairian at heart and Christian in flag ; at bottom an impertinent, possessed by the feeble mania of political intrigue and the puppyism of bad manners ; but beyond everything a fool. Some felicity of repartee, aided by a scoffing cast, made him pass for an unrecognized Talleyrand, and he was as proud of it — ! A fool, I repeat, admirer of Pigault-Lebrun¹ and champion of the liberties of the Gallican church. He horrified

¹ Augier's grandfather, a voluminous writer of empty, frothy, and libertinous novels, very popular in their day.

us. That was the least of his troubles ; but we did not conceal from him that we thought him at the same time very ridiculous, and he underwent a sorrow from it which avenged us without, alas ! converting him. When he saw Roman principles dominate at last in the religious press and the royalist press, the last appearances of reason seemed to flicker out in him. He died assisted by Giboyer, who had become his chum while meditating a memorial to persuade the Pope to excommunicate Déodat. He detested Déodat, who had decisively shown him the door.

Couturier — Ah ! but from all you have just said, it results that we have not hit off our Marquis d'Auberive so ill.

Marquis — Pardon me, dear M. Gibaugier : your Marquis d'Auberive is a plagiarism, a caricature ; and more than all a calumny. Plagiarism : he is Figaro, but this time his very image. Caricature : a marquis of seventy and with eighty thousand francs income cannot lose the style of a gentleman ; your marquis bustles about like a comic valet, and talks exactly the language of Giboyer. Calumny : you give as the type of a class actually living, a figure who has long since disappeared from that class, and which never was there as often as the miserable hates of the democracy allege. The corrupt of the old régime have been amply punished for the crime — a great one, moreover — of having abandoned the law of God and the law of their order, to live according to the maxims of free thought. You know what hands their heads fell under, and what pockets their goods passed into ; you know too what was the moral superiority of Robespierre and Fouquier-Tinville over Almamiva. Those who escaped and did not turn their coats have left no descendants. It is twenty years since I saw the last one die, — more than half of yours.

D'Aigremont — Observe, M. Gibaugier, that the Marquis d'Auberive, whom you profess to make us a present of, is entirely and resolutely yours, passed over to the democracy with arms and baggage, disinheriting his own blood to enrich Giboyer's grandson.

Couturier — No, that doesn't make the Marquis a democrat. He merely shows once more that he is the true father of Fernande.

Marquis — Ah, let us talk of that papa !

Couturier — Why, certainly. That allusion, multiplied in the piece, runs through it like a golden thread by which the

lovable Fernande is unceasingly relinked to her illustrious origin. The thread perpetually reappears with a bolder jiviality. The peevish spirits, the Clericals, — let us speak out the word, the hypocrites, — affect false modesty about it. They turn away like Tartufe before the innocent shoulders of Dorine. They say the cynicism is not comic, and that the incessant calling up of the adulterous and defunct mother makes something lugubrious and unclean hover about the daughter which does not embellish her. Come, then, my prudish gentlemen, set yourselves to the free step of the democratic muse. Its frank indecency amuses the audience greatly. There is a wave of laughter every time the Marquis shows George Dandin's [Molière's gulled husband] cap on the bourgeois Maréchal's oratorical forehead.

D'Aigremont — A fine trade, M. Gibaugier, that of dramatic and democratic moralist !

Couturier — Know, sir, that the moralist purifies everything he touches. We are straightforward in this, we of that order. Assured of the purity of our intentions, we gaze with open eyes, we speak with un-muffled voices. We leave to you the indecisive glances, the timid desires, the "chaste vows," and [reading] "that mystic sensuality which is the orgy of virtue."

Marquis — The author of "Giboyer" has his mysticism — we will speak of it ; but assuredly it is not that of Christians nor the chaste. While we are touching on this subject, the phrase you have just borrowed from him brings me back to his style, which is of the grossest, especially in the two characters where seemliness and distinction of language should be indispensable, — that of the Marquis and that of the Baroness. The Marquis is an old rogue who turns over to democracy, the Baroness is an adventuress — so be it ! But since they lead the entire Faubourg Saint-Germain, since they are the chiefs of the Legitimist and Catholic party, this rogue and this adventuress ought at least to speak the language of the territory and the situation. Otherwise, what credit could they obtain ? Without exquisite dignity of language and exquisite correctness of bearing, the Baroness is especially impossible. You allow to the dramatic poet all improbabilities of matter : but the probability of persons and characters is the first law of art ; here it is absurdly violated. Outside of his nauseous and insupportable affectation of septuagenarian "tough subject," your Marquis talks like Giboyer. He is not an old dotard, he is not an old gentleman, he is Figaro, and Figaro smuttet. He makes ribald

speeches to his servant, he makes them to the Baroness, he makes them *aside* to himself; he cannot have enough of them. He is not content to draw from the grave the memory of the first Mme. Maréchal's slip; he laughs at his own wife, dead also, and that for the amusement of his valet-de-chambre! A perfect example of mediocre wit very ill placed. He says to his nephew, on showing him Fernande, "*Do as well for yourself.*" He had already said to him: "She is the handsomest person I know — *I boast of it*": — a tricksiness borrowed directly from Figaro. Giboyer may permit himself these hiccoughs of bad literature; but a gentleman, the chief of a party! The Marquis announcing to the Baroness that he has found the duplicate of Déodat, and is to make him the editor-in-chief of his journal, defines him, "*A lad that will lard his own father with epigrams for a modest compensation, and eat him like celery for five francs more.*" Giboyer might speak so: the Marquis could not. If you admit as a trait of character that his imbecile rage for playing the wit leads him to belittle himself with the people he employs, he would at least employ the language of men of high rank. This language you are ignorant of has more elevation than yours, and not less energy. The remark applies still more to the Baroness' language. This pious great lady, the oracle of high society, has the smart speech of a *soubrette*. The long scene with the Marquis in the first act is a skirmish of Frontin with Marton. What is said on either side is equally out of character. They drop the mask, they send back the ball, they openly condemn themselves, they make compacts like unblushing *picaros*. I deny that any woman, even an intriguer, would listen (unless to be identified) to half the grossnesses she allows to be said to her. She accepts, she responds, she thrusts. The Marquis compliments her eyes; — "It's well for you, *scoffer*, to pay attention to such things as that." I am surprised that she never calls him an old scamp. She rallies him on account of the first Mme. Maréchal, where every one must know he is doting, and he does not fail to expand. There are other polite speeches, like this: "It's a fool you want for a husband." — "Because —?" And, "You do anything you please with me." — "Ah, Baroness! how I'd take you at your word if I were only sixty!" Pure infection!

Count — And the scene in the third act, where the Baroness sets herself to inflame the young Count d'Outreville by making him fasten her bracelet on! And if you had seen it played!

Marquis — I can imagine it. I have not followed the theater for some years without viewing that scene many times every year ; and I know what actresses who play the devotee parts are capable of. In general, they excel by perversions ; but that is what is needed to carry away the public. Tartufe with the face of an honest man would empty the seats. The comedian would take one half more trouble and not have so much personal pleasure nor so much success.

D'Aigremont — Moliere wanted "Tartufe" played in lay dress : the comedians rig him out in a semi-ecclesiastical costume. They know quite well what they are doing.

Marquis — Pay attention to the mystery of the theater. The theater is neither an art nor a career like others. Applause, money, fame, are to be found there ; but all is not glory, still less honor. In truth, the comic tribe is a tribe of outlaws. On the little door at the rear, where the actors enter, is the inscription of hell, *Lasciate* : lose the hope of egress, lose the hope of ever tearing from off your flesh the cassock and the fard of the histrion ! On the other side of that slope begins the inaccessible. Where the world in general enters, the comedian cannot penetrate more. His opulence is courted, justice is rendered to his private qualities : there will always be that other, always a rag of that cassock, always a streak of that fard. One of the actors of "Giboyer" bells after the cross of the Legion of Honor. His ambition seems modest. He is old, honest as an individual, professor of declamation, author of diverse decent rhymes ; nevertheless he cannot pluck this cornflower he sees blooming, like the democratic "lily," down to his least tradesmen. The day when a comedian, be he ten times a well-bred man, shall attach the cross of the Legion to Scapin's waistcoat, the Grand Chancellor may pack up, the institution will be dead. Outlaws, I tell you, outlaws in perpetuity ! Now, just as the characteristic of the exile is to sigh for his fatherland, the characteristic of the outlaw is to hate it. He wishes to reënter there, but as conqueror. The exile, driven out by force and often by injustice, is willing to pardon ; the outlaw, who is barred out by his own free will, does not pardon. He holds a grudge against the order from which he has separated. He loves to launch sarcasms at it, to defame it by the representation of conditions and characters which constitute its vigor more than he, and whence his own person is more irreparably set apart. That is perhaps why the

rôles of dashing blackguards are so abundant and so varied in the modern theater, since Figaro : they excite the spirit of the comedians more, and in consequence serve the fortunes of the theater better. Next after the Giboyers and the Marions who trample on the heads of society, the parts assured of finding mordant interpreters are those of evil-spirited great lords, big stupid bourgeois, honest country boobies, hypocritical and corrupt great ladies. The last character affords revenges, and the most limited actresses sometimes display a surprising art in them. They sting, they burn, they have hypocrisies and audacities that transport the audience. Be sure that more than one, inwardly, is not content with tasting her glory and doing homage to her virtue. She says to herself, "I am better than those women, I am frank, I wear my heart on my sleeve!" That may be done very well at the Théâtre Français, but I am persuaded it is not done very ill at the Périgueux Theatre [provincial].

Count — Let us understand, uncle. Very well for the audience, yes. It rumbles : a growl of bestial contentment runs incessantly through that mass, bursts out in acclamations, mounts into delirium. It is curious and shocking. You see there, on certain faces, the completest flowering out of the most evil human stupidity. At the torture of the virgin martyrs there were certainly those faces, silly, cruel, and entertained. But that the actress represents, even afar, the personage she calls herself, a woman of the world of rank, I deny.

Marquis — Good heavens, where should she have met with a model to copy ? There is more than the river between the drawing-room of the noble and holy Countess Swetchine and the Théâtre Français. The ladies of the Théâtre Français study the ladies of the Faubourg Saint-Germain in the pictures their writers make for them, as they hardly pass the bridges themselves.

Count — Quite right. The dress, the voice, the attitude, are there no more than the language, the thoughts, and the manners : it is scarcely a monkey's mimicry.

D'Aigremont — The scene in the first act is played as it is written. A dialogue introduces an Academician and a muse who solicits the prize for virtue. As to the scene of the bracelet —

Count — It is indescribable. I do not know a young booby, even a pupil of M. de Sainte-Agathe and freshly arrived from

the County, whom such manœuvres would not promptly illuminate, and who would let himself marry after having been their object. Certainly, the excess of morality which the author attributes to the Count d'Outreville is a very humiliating thing for that gentleman. To have kept till twenty-eight "the holy ignorance of evil" — that fact disastrously overloads his sad and shameful condition of a legitimate son. He loses *Fernande Maréchal* by it : a good thing. But in order that this double infirmity should still further expose him to the misfortune of marrying the Baroness, the actress overdoes it. He must see clearly, or he is an incurable idiot ; and then his density proves nothing in favor of the folder-girl's son. When I heard, in the atmosphere poisoned by these indecencies and these guffaws, the name of the Countess Swetchine murmured, I underwent the same thrill of indignation as formerly when the street singers insulted *Lamoricière* ; and I can hardly pardon myself for having been more patient. Truly the outrage is ours, since we submit to it.

Marquis — My dear boy, there are times when the hearts which these kinds of outrage still arouse can claim no other vengeance than submitting to them and feeling them. It is a great affliction, but it is a great honor. Happy they who are neither among the executioners, nor of the executioners' train, nor of the vast mob of indifferents ; and who, unable to fight longer, uncover before the victims when they pass escorted by hoots ! Let us detest the impiety of this populace led on by actors. At the very moment it crushes us, we can still tear from it the dearest part of its triumph, by rendering homage to the virtues it insults. *Sophie Swetchine*, so good, so wise, so humble, so pious toward God and the poor, so mild to error, so justly venerated ! Many among us, and I was of them, reproached her with too much clemency toward some new ideas ; others, with too much rigor toward herself, with squandering too much on good works the last days of her exhausted old age, and with unwillingness to fight bodily affliction except with the forces of the soul. She smiled ; and day by day were seen in her more of holy severity toward herself, more of holy sweetness toward any other. When I met her in the morning less than five years ago, dragging herself along the road to church, I sometimes offered her my arm, sometimes contented myself with respectfully following her ; it seemed to me that her passing established a current of pure air in the street. I saw that

Giving Alms



she was about to die, and I knew with what eulogiums and what tears she would be honored. If I had harbored the thought that a man of letters, even the lowest, was to seek in that noble existence for a motive of libellous caricature to be exploited by comedians, I should have thought I heard the reproaches of my old friend, and should have asked pardon for pushing to the point of insult my scorn of the present time.

Couturier — Marquis, let us talk seriously. My author has his faults, and even sins; but I do not believe he can be accused of intending to insult the sainted woman you speak of.

Marquis — The entire play is nothing but an outrage!

Couturier — Be it so. But this would be too absurd. Besides, you know he defends himself from having indulged in personalities. He has only confessed to one. It is a good feeling, and we must believe him.

Marquis — Whatever his feeling may be, I do not excuse him when he accuses himself; and when he excuses himself, I do not believe him. His entire apology on this point seems to me a shabby thing both in form and in substance. He does not intend, he says, to insult either M. Guizot or Mme. Swetchine, nor anybody save Déodat alone. Unfortunately, it is a phrase of M. Guizot, a Protestant, which serves as the theme for the entire episode of the political speech confided by the Clericals to the Protestant D'Aigremont. By another misfortune, he has given his adventuress the name, the foreign condition, and the particular and special position of Mme. Swetchine. Everybody knows that the drawing-room of the Russian Countess Sophie Swetchine was long the principal, not to say the only, Catholic salon of the Faubourg Saint-Germain. Was your author the only one to be ignorant of it? The public immediately pronounced the name of Mme. Swetchine as it did that of M. Guizot. As to M. Guizot, your author is very sorry for him. He spends himself in denials which hardly raise the character of his attack, and which he has the mortification of not seeing accepted. As to Sophie Swetchine, who is dead, I do not know whether he has truly done himself the honor of experiencing a regret. He professes to know perfectly the rights and duties of comedy. "It owes," he says, "respect to persons, but it has a right over things." Is he capable of believing that the name, the quality, and what I may call the distinctive function of Sophie Swetchine, are *things*, and the

person of Déodat a *thing* too? These shufflings proclaim a humiliated, not to say troubled, spirit. The poet has not succeeded as he fancied he should; his victims live more honored than he. But the visible embarrassment he experiences avenges them without justifying him. He remains the author flagellated by the public conscience for an offense remarkable in grossness among all those of the modern muse, so hardened an offender.

Couturier — Marquis, you are implacable. I feel in you the spirit of the lamented Déodat, who, in his life, fortunately ended but too long, did so much harm to good doctrines by his rage for sustaining them entire. Come, don't you grant me anything? Do you reproach our author with the portrait of Déodat, too? If you fall into that excess, I become Gibaugier again to combat you.

Marquis — Oh, as to the portrait of Déodat, I have the same feeling as Déodat himself: he is satisfied.

D'Aigremont — He is not wrong. The grandson of Pigault-Lebrun, author of "Giboyer's Son," is above all suspicion of complaisance toward a Clerical writer in disfavor. Nevertheless, I know not how he could flatter our friend more. Firstly, this name of Déodat: *a Deo datus* [given by God]; Scripture teaches us that in the third war of David against the Philistines, Adéodat, son of the forest, Bethlehemite in origin, slew Goliath of Gath, brother of the Goliath whom David had slain. Secondly, he calls him the *hussar of orthodoxy*; but that phrase, whatever way you take it, is only a delicate compliment from the pen of the writer who dedicated his first work to the "venerated memory" of the author [Pigault-Lebrun] of "The Quoter," a treatise of putrid impiety. Thirdly, he says the style of Déodat "consists in doubling up the free-thinker, knocking out the philosopher, and in a word, preceding the ark with cane and billy." But that is Giboyer's style. Déodat neither spoke nor knew any gutter-slang, no more that of the Bohemian than any other. But really, to flagellate and lay low the free-thinker has nothing infamous about it. *Percussit Adeodatus Goliath Gethæi*: Scripture does not blame that action. And as to "preceding the ark with cane and billy," the poet cannot condemn that exercise — he who gives himself up so zealously to it before the car of state. All the more must he think Déodat a fool to wield the billy without protection and without profit, and address himself even to the people who can crush

him and have done it. Our poet has carried *his* method to perfection : he has the police on his side, and he attacks only non-combatants and handcuffed persons. To speak his own tongue for a moment, he *doubles up* the invalid, he *knocks out* the vanquished. If it is not the most glorious trade he could pursue, it is not the least lucrative : serious people could have no subject for hooting like Déodat, who died without having earned enough to bury him. From the meager trade of Déodat, he knows how to draw investment income. Let us give him a brevet for having perfected it. I observe, nevertheless, that if he has greatly softened the rendering, he has quite spoiled the style : I mean Déodat's. It is, he says, "a mixture of Bourdaloue and Turlupin." No one could take that for a slight homage. Bourdaloue ! That name alone places a man instantly at a considerable distance — aloft — from Forcade and Schérer. But Turlupin added to Bourdaloue, the panegyric is a strong one ! Déodat gave an account of the political scene : he could not play Bourdaloue solely in presence of a scene which often required a strong dose of Turlupin. Mme. de Sévigné did not soar on the track of Bossuet except when there was question of Turenne. How many occasions there are where Turlupin alone is current ! Would it be decent to talk of Giboyer in the style of Bourdaloue ? There must then be two styles, varying according to the subjects. If Déodat had been able to unite them, he would be a master workman. He does not say that of himself, and he praises himself only for the instinct which made him undertake the enterprise. For your author that does not exist ! He wishes to glorify the democracy, to place in their luster and their heaven the immortal principles of '89, obscured by the black vapors of the past ; there is a subject for eloquence : I listen, I wait for Bourdaloue, I never hear anything but Turlupin.

Couturier — The Bourdaloue, sir, is in Giboyer's manuscript, have no doubt.

Marquis — Then at the end of the comedy print the august manuscript as a *pièce justificative*. Or else don't turn up your nose at Turlupin, when you seem so perfectly incapable of getting away from him. *You foolishly attribute your qualities to others.*

D'Aigremont — And still, the Turlupinade may have a literary form ; it is still irony, it is still the hiss. The *Giboyade* is only a servile insult ; the method, in fact, of the mercenary to

whom one says, "Sell me your insolence and set your price." Suppose now around the mercenary a reënforcement of police or mob who shelter him in every way, up to imposing silence on indignant spectators: what do you think of *that* trade? Giboyer the fact, the real Giboyer, the one you see at work every morning and every evening, the democrat formerly conservative, then socialist and "an-archist," now "authoritary," — he works at that, this thinker, always ready to "empty a poisoned ink-bottle on *whoever*." ¹ But the ideal and cleaned-up Giboyer whom you put forward for public veneration would not do it, or the public could not support the sight.

Marquis — So that your author, M. Gibaugier, wishing to defame but one man, — just one, no more, — has so managed that the one man he wishes to defame is precisely the one adversary to whom his thought renders a legitimate homage, even in the very insult with which he professes to overwhelm him. He calumniates without reserve and without measure the brute Voltairianism in the person of Maréchal; the cultivated Voltairianism in the person of the Marquis d'Auberive; the aristocracy in the person of Count d'Outreville; the great Christian world in the person of Baroness Pfeffers; the great bourgeois world in the person of the defunct Mme. Maréchal and that of the living Mme. Maréchal; the parliamentary world in the person of Maréchal and that of Couturier; finally, the democracy in the person of the elder Giboyer, who after all is nothing but a blackguard, in that of the younger Giboyer, who will never be anything but an ink-stained pedant, and in that of Fernande Maréchal, who has already cut her eye-teeth: what shall I say? he does not spare even the livery, that uniform of future equality; and the Marquis' servant, a certain Dubois, appears just at the time it is necessary to show the profile of a hypocrite. But Déodat he honors in fact, and above all by comparison; and this hostile portrait is the sole figure in the entire work which represents almost an honest man. Look closely.

Couturier — Ah, I see it too well! I think at least I may assure you it was not done purposely.

D'Aigremont — That is why no honor accrues to the painter from it, and he remains with the ridiculous remorse of having failed in a bad action.

¹ "Sur quiconque." Note by Veuillot: I do not know whether the author wished to write Giboyer French, or thought he was writing French *in earnest*. This doubt arises frequently in the course of the play.

Couturier — Huh? a bad action?

D'Aigremont — Yes, M. Gibaugier, a bad action, and judged so by men who are not the friends of Déodat in anything. Many would gladly have pardoned the wrong of wishing to belittle him: an invincible shame compels them to protest against the fashion. What! traduce an individual on the stage, attack his character, throw doubt on his convictions, deliver him up without possible defense to the judgments of a crowd completely incapable of disenvenoming the injury! This is more than the vengeance of the Sioux permits: it is to create a formidable precedent against all independent opinion. Such excesses not being commissible except with the concurrence of public authority, that alone will govern their employment, that is to say, will alone employ them. That terrible weapon has been given up to it! There will never be any lack of mercenaries to handle it! Déodat is struck first, another's turn may come. The plank is thrown across; and it is not to the honor of your poet to have opened again this passage in the thrice-dismantled rampart of public liberty. I doubt whether the virtuous Giboyer will be killed in the breach. No more in that will he be the duplicate of Déodat.

Couturier — Oh, come, M. d'Aigremont, —

“Man is most prone of all the living world
To rush into excess.”

Let us quit this chapter: or is Déodat's honor your turlutaine?

D'Aigremont — A little. I do not yet blush for his cause, and I gladly defend him against those who decry him. I say that a few journalists such as Déodat was, speaking with entire frankness, speaking French, full of love for their cause, incapable of disguising it, incapable of betraying it, ill able to serve it but ready to die for it — I say that a few journalists of this moral stamp, scattered among the newspapers, could render the press a certain service which to-day it lacks, a certain savor of frankness which all the works of all the Giboyers of the democracy and the theater will never make up for. Insult that man and hand him over to the hoots of the audience, down to the pettiest villages: an honor has been done him which you will not efface. His name is the synonym for the liberty of the press. When he was overthrown, the liberty of the press underwent an eclipse; it will not reappear till he has arisen.

That will be the sign. Till then he may console himself for your outrages by contemplating his hand, mutilated and bound.

Couturier — May it remain so for the growth of civil and religious concord! We shall end by enjoying a delightful calm, provided “that insulter” does not irritate our lords the journalists and vaudevillists. See how they respect the Catholic beliefs, since Déodat no longer respects them.

D'Aigremont — Nothing truer could be said, Master Gibaugier, and there you are in accord with a good number of excellent Christians who reproached Déodat with not being hostile enough to the established power. On account of that, they have insulted and defamed him much more sensibly than all the democrats have been able to do. If your author read the polemic writings of his brothers of the Academy, — *there are almost five whom I could name*, — he would be surprised to see that Christians, gentlemen, and even more [archbishops], had carried their passion so far as to inveigh against Déodat in the very style of the Marquis d'Auberive and Giboyer. And it is a signal service you have rendered him, since at last he has reason to hope that his adversaries, the only ones who have been able to strike near his heart, will blush for having anticipated and perhaps instigated you. They must at the very least fear to imitate you.

Couturier — Pshaw! pshaw! the essential is that Déodat should reappear no more. He will never be dead enough! It is necessary to trample on him, and over his ruins inaugurate the era of literary good manners. War against Déodat is war against barbarism. When we have befouled his name with a common effort, then politeness will become the law of writers. Notice already how my author and another Academician, taking to the laurels on Giboyer's account, delicately pummel each other: “*Truffled caterpillar!*” says the one; “*Ungrateful dog!*” says the other. There is Atticism! Would your Déodat, the clown, have found such flowers? Let us restore everything to the tone of good fellowship. But to sum it all up, *Delendus est Deodatus!* It is social work, and I judge that on such an occasion St. Pius V. and all the other saints received at the Academy must act in concert with their brother Giboyer. No treaty, I say, and let us destroy Déodat! That will at least be something the Academy has done in this century, for —

Marquis — What, you have not ended?

Couturier — On such a chapter I should never finish! In a

word, to abridge, "Reprisals are so legitimate against that insulter, and he is so well armed for self-defense!"

D'Aigremont — Yes, and so well assisted by the crown attorney, who is watchful not to leave him too free an arm or too long a sword! But since you speak of reprisals, the quarrel must be settled. Such reprisals against a man reduced to silence, that is to say buried for three years, would indicate a rankling memory of blows very rough and very deep. Now I asked Déodat himself about that. I supposed merely, I confess, that he must of old have struck your author pretty hard. He recalled nothing of the kind, and thought he had never even named him.

Couturier — Then I have known of it longer than Déodat himself. You are not ignorant that he meddles in verse-making, since his hateful prose has no further outlet. It will be a sweet occupation, and one which might, if he would be wise, procure him some repose at last. But character must show through, and the knave writes satires. He published one the year past — what a shame! After having had for twenty years the honor of occupying himself with politics and the great affairs of the country, this man cannot accept his exile, and descends to literary frivolity in the little unstamped collections which can say nothing serious.

D'Aigremont — That is sad. But really, since Déodat did not make a fortune before the ark, and one must live —

Couturier — Oh, well! anyway, let him try to live without troubling the industry of his neighbors!

D'Aigremont — What harm has he done you?

Couturier — No harm, to be sure: he couldn't. But he makes himself disagreeable. In this piece, entitled "The Poetic Art," he strikes at heads crowned by the muse; he pretends that this goddess is sometimes of the demi-monde!

Marquis — He is wrong; it is a commonplace.

Couturier — Listen: —

"A share to procure
Of Budget or book-sales or Monthyon's lure,¹

. * . * * * *

With a drama of virtue all eyelids they shut;
Ope them wide the next night with a play full of smut;
People throng to the latter, applaud to the skies,
Hiss the former, but Monthyon pays with his prize:

¹ The Monthyon prize for virtue, given annually.

And the author, wide open his hand at each door,
 Can tell whether virtue or vice brings in more.
 This fellow, who Molière his psalter has made,
 Can annotate 'Tartufe' as brother in trade."

How does it seem to you ?

D'Aigremont — Then you take that to yourself ?

Couturier — Well, we have received a prize of virtue.

"If one has fixed in me so sharp a fang,
 Am I to weep as stripling unavenged ?"

Marquis — "All reprisals are legitimate against that insulter." Ah, poor and imprudent Déodat, to be so often taken for a Liberal Tartufe ! Paul Louis Courier said to himself, probably without believing it, "Paul Louis, the bigots will kill thee !" He was killed by a stable Antinoüs who scorned utterly the commandments of God and those of the Church. As to me, I said to Déodat, and I made no mistake : "The bigots of free thought will gag thee ; they will prevent thee from saying that the earth turns around, and they will accuse thee of persecuting Galileo."

D'Aigremont — Nevertheless, I do not believe the author of Giboyer has yielded to a personal resentment. He would have been more moderate. It is as avenger of the flourishing Giboyer species that he considered everything permissible. On this head, I admit, he had long reprisals to execute. Déodat has often met his clients, and has maltreated them everywhere. The Giboyers are relatives of Tartufe, and Tartufe is one of the ancestors of the democracy. When the democratic sheets are provided, or when the times are calm and Giboyer can no longer earn "his tobacco" by barking at Christians, what does he do ? He changes his tobacco pouch into a rosary, introduces himself to Orgon, dupes and plunders him. I could cite twenty Giboyers, all perfect democrats, who have filched their orthography, their Latin, and their Hebrew, in the [clerical] seminaries. Before placing themselves where any one sees them, they have become Orleanist journalists, Legitimist journalists, some even religious journalists. Giboyer tells us that the Republic refused his services ; that is because he does not wish to "lard his own mother with epigrams." He serves her always. She is, thank God, neither delicate enough nor prudent enough to remove him from official functions ; but he him-

self likes better to serve her with the enemy. Outside the advantage of gain, he finds there what is honor to him, the honor of betraying. Buttoned up in a borrowed coat, he exhales the more as his proper smell that essence of infection which distinguishes him from the common run of corrupted beings. I know a Giboyer, formerly a conservative journalist, later a republican journalist, to-day a democratic-authoritary journalist, who says of himself, "I am a frank blackguard!" You cannot imagine the feeling he puts into it. I would defy Aristides to say with as much pride, "I am an honest man." His turlutaine is to insult the more the people whose pity he has been able to surprise. He is destined to end in a hospital; he will calumniate the Sisters, and if, before expiring, he can set fire to the building with his short pipe, he will die content. Well! pray God that here and there the bandit may not find means of introducing himself into some Legitimist or Clerical sheet! Déodat had a scent for divining these soldiers of fortune. He has bought them largely; they have hated him largely. This trait of character is fortunately observed in the piece. Giboyer, so large in all the employments of intelligence, displays aversion for the sincere man he is to replace. It is very simple: this sincere man has done a thing which Giboyer can never imitate. My conclusion is that your poet is fulfilling a shabby function: having nothing on his own account for which to meddle with Déodat or with politics, he has followed counsels of whose reason he is ignorant, and embarked in an enterprise whose range he cannot measure.

Couturier — Bow-wow-wow! You admit that this is hardly credible, and explains itself no better than the rest.

D'Aigremont — The democratic instinct so natural in the inferior literature, the desire to please powerful patrons inseparable from that instinct, the penchant for impossible rehabilitations, the hope of a success, the certainty of a great commotion, — all that, joined to absolute ignorance of the true world, explains perfectly what we have here. This piece is a sort of monster without head or tail, which its very father himself would not know how to name; but a growling, howling, rolling monster, full of absurd passion, and really threatening damage enough to frighten even eyes that could not otherwise contemplate him without scorn. Certain minds have only muscular strength as it were, sufficient for this sort of work. Shallow and violent, they are launched; launched, they become

furious before even having received blows. The bull rushes on, stumbles, and bellows.

Marquis — Bulls have been known which have preserved that character.

Couturier — Gentlemen, avowals have escaped you which glorify us. I will point them out. Notice first how you side with the astute Clerical, who circulates all kinds of injurious reports to pollute the innocence of our work; see how you change the situations. You are the aggressors, and you pose as victims. Listen there to the complaints of the author: they are touching, however little French they may be. For, I confess with impartiality, it is not by our French that we shine, at least in the preface.

Marquis — Read us that.

Couturier [reading] —

“By what Clerical cunning is there roused against my comedy the anger of parties it does not touch? By what falsification of my words does one succeed in pretending to believe —”

[A few lines and a few italics are omitted here, being ridicule on technical points of French grammar, not translatable.]

Couturier — Don't interrupt! — “succeed in pretending to believe that I attack fallen governments?”

D'Aigremont — Ah, Clerical atrocity!

Couturier — I continue: “Certainly it is adroit tactics to excite against me a chivalrous sentiment which has an echo in all honest hearts —”

Marquis — Excite a sentiment *which has an echo* — and in all honest hearts, too!

Couturier — I continue: “But where are the enemies I strike down? I see them erect *at all the tribunes* —”

Marquis — You are misreading, or rather you are improvising.

Couturier — I am reading: “— at all the tribunes [*sic*]; they are *in train* to escalate the triumphal car. And when I dare, wretched me, to pull them by the legs —”

Count — There's an image for you.

Couturier — “— they turn around crying, ‘Respect the vanquished!’ Really, it is very amusing.”

D'Aigremont — As for me, I find it all very sad. It is the cry of virtue without eloquence: there is nothing more offensive. Nevertheless, after this protestation and this prostration,

we cannot “*prétend to believe*” that the author is in the least disposed to maintain the combat either against the Academicians, or against the deputies, or against any adversary whatever in readiness to speak. He permits himself to “pull them by the legs,” but only for a joke! The one adversary he attacks seriously and with resolution is Déodat, dead and buried. The only obligation to the dead is truth. — Next?

Couturier — Next, take notice of a side touching the old Auberive, and the indirect homage rendered to the aristocracy, since you accuse us of bemeaning it. At first sight the Marquis seems a finished scoundrel. He bears in him all the corruptions of the ancient society, so happily regenerated by the Spirit of '89; he is skeptical, insolent, cynical: but he has a turlutaine, a delicious turlutaine, the same one as Giboyer — paternal love! He loves his daughter, Fernande Maréchal, and all he does is at bottom only to establish her, adopt her, and honestly bequeath his property to her. Fernande, whatever you may say of her, is charming, generous, pure; which again proves our enlarged sentiments. If in the person of the Count d'Outreville we trample on the legitimate children of the aristocracy, in the angelic person of Fernande we lift up its bastards. Ah, gentlemen, we are not so hard to suit! An origin a little irregular, an education purged of all Christian prejudice — we exact no more, and we gladly recognize superior qualities in whoever is not stained with the vices of the past. Pay attention to the fact that by her marriage with Giboyer's son, the Marquis d'Auberive's daughter enters fully into the democracy; thus the old aristocrat becomes the grandfather of the integral and the pure democratic type which is born of this fortunate union. The true democracy, then, will be the legitimate granddaughter of the Marquis d'Auberive and Giboyer.

Marquis — Two dunghills to enrich that lily. How beautiful it will be! This is perfect. This is the true mysticism of democracy, which I proposed to deduce for you: my task is done. Finish avenging your author.

Couturier — It will be very easy. You reproach him with a taste for impossible rehabilitations. In the first place, it is the taste of the public itself, and must be gratified. Secondly, it is all right from the point of view of the democracy. Democracy is a serious thing, because it is a theology. This theology makes man a God, by enfranchising his soul. It promises him, it gives him, universal absolution for all that formerly went on

contrary to rule, to duty, to honor. This is the sense of democratic rehabilitations. The Catholics also like to rehabilitate, but how foolishly they set about it ! They rehabilitate institutions or persons damaged by history. Waste papers ! all the better to amuse curiosity. We, however, rehabilitate types and groups : the convict, the free damsel, the enfranchised wife, the bastard. We set up a lifting pump that plays every old sewer up to the sky. That is a salutary task, and truly in accordance with the Spirit of '89. These rehabilitations which you pretend are impossible are not only quite possible, but most welcome. We give you here the rehabilitation of bastardy and that of literary tramping : they answer perfectly. Giboyer the bastard and Giboyer the tramp drag after them in triumph, the one the prejudged Outreville, the other the prejudged Déodat. The bastard pockets the heritage of the legitimate heir ; the mercenary tramp carries off the palm of the loyal fighter. When you say that my poet has no spirit — ¹

Marquis — Oh, the Spirit of '89 : he is full of that.

Couturier — He has another : that of renouncing the spirit which may be contrary to his period, and the madness of flying in the teeth of the wind. You ask the old morality of him, do you ? He could give it, he has given it, and a presentable specimen, which was bought of him for a good price with the virtuous money of Daddy Monthyon. But the public refused that forage, cut in the almost blessed precincts that bloom between the savings bank and the temple of Vesta. What is ten thousand francs paid by the bureau of literary good manners, beside the receipts of "Giboyer's Son" ? You were given a first Giboyer, a female Giboyer, a treatise in the old style, with the old wit. It was called "The Adventuress." She is an actress whose turlutaine is to reënter virtue by marrying an old dotard madly in love with her. Her desire is perfectly sincere. But the old man's son comes into view : he is still young and well made, and here is our Giboyeress unfaithful ; that is, she wants to be virtuous with the young fellow. The son, — a legitimate son, to be sure, — though not finding himself altogether insensible to the purity of such a flame, recognizes what is due to his father, drives out the princess, and reëstablishes order in the house. There is vivacity there, a certain perfume of language, a touch of poesy, almost two characters, a good enough caricature, a basis of comedy, and lastly too much morality, since the father

¹ *Esprit*, wit. The pun is untranslatable.

is utterly debased before his family. But since after all it is the old virtue that triumphs over interested vice, the success was but ordinary : fifty representations and nothing more. There is what happens with your old-fashioned virtue : a few thousand francs. Let us alone, then ! La Bruyère said of Corneille, "*He judged of the goodness of his play only by the money that came to him.*"

D'Aigremont — Out of modesty : the great Corneille thought the public a better judge than himself, and said, "The play brings in money because it is good."

Couturier — We have that in common with the great Corneille — with a slight change, and we say, "The play is good because it brings in money."

Marquis — Spirit of '89.

Couturier — That is true. It reigns, it crowns, it grants.

Marquis — Proceed : you are getting on wonderfully well. We shall be defeated shortly.

Couturier — Do you still say the piece has neither head nor tail, that even the author did not know what name to give it ?

D'Aigremont — Yes, I said that. I add that I have laughed heartily at the efforts of the author in his preface to explain what he was trying to do. Barbey d'Aurevilly compares him to an upholsterer who cannot strike a blow with a hammer without pounding his fingers. In truth, he humps and bruises himself everywhere. He pretends that his piece is not political, it is *social*. What is a *social* piece, and how can a social piece not be political ? He tells us nothing about it. This piece, "which is not political and does not make war on any fallen governments," nevertheless attacks all parties that represent the spirit of the old governments ; it attacks even the actual government, so far as it is the protector of the temporal power of the papacy, that which primarily constitutes it Clerical. We can name such a ministry in existence which unites the Legitimist Auberive and the Parliamentary Couturier in "the hate and fear of democracy." And that is not politics ?

Couturier — It is not politics "in the current sense of the word."

D'Aigremont — And what is the current sense of the word, Mr. One of the Forty ?

Couturier — Oh, you are too curious. See the Dictionary of the Academy.

D'Aigremont — After having floundered about deplorably

on *social* and *political*; after having said, in his tongue, that his non-political piece should be called "The Clericals," if that political vocable were in theatrical currency, — the author discovers all at once his subject: "The antagonism of the *ancient principle* and the *modern principle* — here, then, is the motive of my play. I defy any one to find a word going beyond that *question*." And I defy him to show a word in the play which touches that *question*; I defy him especially to show there either ancient principle or modern principle, or trace of any antagonism whatever toward democracy. I see there only fools and blackguards who are in perfect accord to make this daughter of Giboyer triumph. Where is the struggle? where is the contradiction? where is the obstacle? In this *social* piece, where appears a shadow of the social forces that society opposes to the invasion of Giboyerism? Lift the miserable masks attached with so feeble a hand to the manikins so ill put together, and contemplate the true personages. In place of the Marquis d'Auberive, you have Noailles or Luyne or Des Cars, or the gentleman farmer who lives on his place, helps his poor neighbors, rears his sons for the public service, introduces agricultural improvements, preserves intact his old name and his old residence. In place of the Count d'Outreville, you have the scion of noble stock who has taken the uniform, and maintains on his part the traditions of the old honor under the new flag; you have the brother of St. Vincent de Paul, who holds aloof from the fortunes of his time, but not from its miseries, and studies more closely than you the secret of diminishing them; finally, you have the pontifical Zouave, the soldier of Castelfidardo, — one of those who are the last of the ancient chivalry or the first of the modern chivalry, if modern times are destined to see anything so fine. What a figure would be cut among them by the young Giboyer, son of the folder-girl, pen-flunkey to M. Maréchal, and reader to his good lady to occupy his leisure! And Maréchal, and Couturier de la Sarthe, and D'Aigremont — what names do they bear in the world? They are named Guizot, Broglie, Berryer, Montalembert, Ségur d'Aguesseau. Among all these names which opinion respects by some title at this time, — I say those it respects, and not those it adulates, — you will not find one who would be one of yours. Is it this — that is to say, this entire society — which you profess to attach to Giboyer's car, and profess to vanquish with Giboyer's unpublished book?

Couturier — It will be vanquished, none the less, and by Giboyer.

D'Aigremont — Yes, perhaps, but with the brute force of galley-sergeants ; not with his book.

Couturier — It hardly matters. Nevertheless, the book will not damage the victory, nor our comedy. Our comedy goes to the mark. Its character, which you call indefinable, is so clear and so marked that you have just defined it yourself. If I deigned to defend it in its quality of literary work, I should tell you that it has a perfect head and tail. The head is the first act, the tail is the fifth, and you have no right to be harder to please than the public, which is perfectly contented with this composition. I should say as much of the style and the wit : both of them are of the caliber of the readers of the *Siècle*, understood and applauded through all France, except by the Clericals alone. Much we care for your criticisms ! It is not your tongue : it is ours, and will be that of your children. Modern language for modern principles. You will see plenty of others ! Molière's French has grown old, and we will rejuvenate it by transfusing *argot* into it. Argot, too, has a perfect right to be rehabilitated ! Luckless you who stubbornly persist in a tongue apart ! But let us yield that, like the distinction between social and political. The piece is completely political. We deny it so as not to inflict on the administration the annoyance of stamping the wings of the muse, which would have been "too amusing !" And that political piece is equally social, since it is aimed against society.

D'Aigremont — Then "anti-social" is the expression that would suit.

Couturier — Do me the favor of believing that we knew it ; but there are always prejudices to humor. A slight disguise to assure circulation is not blamable, when no one is deceived. The piece, then, is aimed against society : there is nothing more legitimate, since the question is of making the modern principle triumph, and since society, you have just said, is still established on the ancient principle. Now, what is this ancient principle ? Divine right, the right of God ; the Christian principle, the ecclesiastical principle. Then all the holders of the ancient principle, whoever they be, to such degree as they hold it, are people of the Church, *Clericals*. That *vocable* not being in theatrical currency, it has not been inscribed in front of the piece. Another *vocable* would have

still better expressed the design and the sentiment of the author; it is said out loud in the tobacco shop next to the theater, and is the true title: "The Calotins."¹ But that would not be compatible with all the delicacies. The piece has been given the name of the typical anti-Calotin, "Giboyer's Son": a bastard probably not much baptized, certainly very much freed from the obligations of baptism; a university colt who has never been embarrassed by any Catholic idea nor blighted by any Catholic sacrament, who will think himself fully married if it is done only at the town-house, and will content himself with the altar of nature. There is the true representative of the modern principle, set free from every link, every relation with the ancient principle; foreign to the old society, to its traditions, to its worship, made to let drop that past which concerns him in nothing, to tread it under foot without pity, without wrath, without even deigning to see what it is. Do you think all that so little linked together and so little logical?

D'Aigremont — No, truly; and it would be all very clear, if only the preface had explained nothing.

Couturier — Who told you the author explained with the design of making things clear? Besides, clear or not, his explanations are as superfluous as your criticisms are vain. He threw you those out of natural timidity, perhaps, or to disembarass himself from the importunity of your squalls, or to cover a political aim he had too far unmasked. Perhaps too he does not quite know what he has done, and is ignorant himself of the range of his work. These curiosities are hollow: we must look at the aim and the means. Now the aim is clear, the means powerful. Listen to the applauses of the democratic crowd. You despise the crowd, which thoroughly returns it! True, it is only the crowd, but you are only the minority. Reason, protest, cry "calumny"; show your true faces and Giboyer's true face, before which the world and himself would recoil: how does that affect the crowd? You, the honest folk, and he, the scamp—the crowd wants to see you not as you are, but as you are depicted for its pleasure. The masks become the true faces, Giboyer mounts to the Capitol, and—permit me the style of the future—you are wiped out!

D'Aigremont — I am afraid so.

¹ Wearers of the *Calotte*, the priest's cap.

Count — Oh, as for that —

Couturier — Wiped out, I tell you! — I have had for a month the pleasure of seeing Giboyer work at different theaters; I have felt the beast's breath: it is big, it is powerful, and the ramparts it threatens are defended only by its own soldiers. In a discussion on such a subject, we have to borrow words: I borrow a sentence from Voltaire, "A few years more, and the ancient principle will be a fine joke!"

Count — Uncle, are you of that opinion? Can't we fight at all?

Marquis — To be sure! But a little less than now. The entire question lies in knowing whether God will send in his resignation. As to the peoples, they have received theirs and accepted it. The rare individuals who still refuse are what we are, *old fogies*. Recall the names your friend D'Aigremont pronounced just now, and try to find one that exercises a social influence comparable with that of the author of "Giboyer" or the author of "The Old Fogies" ["Les Ganaches"].

Count — What a shame!

Marquis — Ah, yes. As to the importance of these gentlemen, and a crowd of others, it lies not in their merit, but their medal. Let the medal be withdrawn, and the apostolate is ended, and we have to descend a notch, or many, in point of intellectual alimentation. That is what cannot fail to arrive in proportion as democracy *rises*. Other instructors will teach us more formally the rights of democracy and our duties toward that queen. And as these new instructors will be altogether blockheads, there will be a prohibition against replying.

Count — But that is the most insupportable of tyrannies!

Marquis — Oh, the most insupportable! In the matter of tyranny, who indeed can flatter himself that he knows what the human race will endure? This most insupportable tyranny will be only the organization of liberty according to the modern principle, such as the world enjoyed before the advent of the ancient principle: it is a question of expelling. Facts and names are rather muddled up for the service of the democracy! Divine right, which this learned Giboyer characterizes as the *ancient principle*, is of recent social application: it has been in use not fifteen centuries. Up to the moment when it was implanted by Christianity, history is full of nothing but the sayings and doings of human right, the absolute right of man over man. This right was organized perfectly by the marvel whither we are tending — the crowned democracy.

D'Aigremont — That was Nero.

Marquis — It was Caracalla, it was Heliogabalus, it was no matter who; and it went on very well, with poets, men of letters, actors, tribunes, a Senate, consuls, a very brave army, very wise magistrates; with the name of the republic on the moneys and the sovereignty of the people in the protocols. There was an equality which was "not a level," but a succession of levels forming the perfect figure of a hierarchy; only the highest level stopped just at the feet of the emperor: that was equality. The emperor marched at will over all foreheads, raised from the earth to the highest positions, made descend from the highest positions to under the earth, and that for merits or crimes his justice appraised. To each according to his merits! cries the equitable heart of Giboyer; for Giboyer would not be all he should be if he were not a Saint-Simonian too. Who shall legitimately define works, and mete out to them either recompense or punishment? The infallible democracy. But as democracy by itself has nothing but paws, the force of circumstances manufactures for it an omnipotent head, on which it unites the crown and the tiara. And there you have this fine invention of the *crowned democracy*, which gives you at once hierarchy, order, religion, authority, and the treasure of treasures, Equality!

Count — But liberty?

Marquis — Don't you know you must sacrifice something? Liberty is a Christian novelty, incompatible with the noble exigencies of equality. Under the reign of the Gospel, Christianity was a confederation of independences. In place of the Empire, Christianity had constituted the group of nations, free in this atmosphere of general justice which was called the law of nations. In each nation, in place of emperor or proconsul, there was the king, or rather the royalty; a power held in place, as the keystone of an arch is held, by the different parts of the very edifice of which it makes the solidity. Bound to all, royalty depended on all. It was the principal and not the sole head of society. The clergy, the nobility, the magistracy, the corporations, property, formed so many secondary heads which royalty had to obey, but in accordance with a rule, by preserving their legitimate independence and their permanence in the hierarchic rank they occupied. It was complicated. This network offered many obstacles to the circulation of merchandise, vaudevilles, and artillery; but

freedom lived in it! Right always ended by finding some old wall behind which it could fight, wait, and rally the invincible minority of hearts who would not submit to the accomplished fact. '89 has brought order there! Ever since I have been in the world, I have heard disputing as to the gifts which '89 has made or not made to humanity. I am satisfied: it has made us a gift I know well, the spirit of servitude. Only, it has enveloped it in the colors of revolt, and given it the name of equality. Ah! how fitting it was that the Duke of Orleans, the great parricide, should take that sobriquet, and that astonishing logic is at the bottom of it all! '89, then, under the name of equality, has cut off all these heads, breached all these ramparts, razed all these old walls where Right found a refuge. All the boundaries are overthrown or shaken, the universal empire is remaking itself in full view; the figures of the crowned democracy stretch forth the hand over the tiara; and Giboyer, admissible to all employments, believes himself, not without reason, the equal of an honest man. But as for liberty, she can prepare herself to take a long nap in the catacombs.

D'Aigremont — If she finds it! The catacombs of modern Society are sewers lighted with gas.

Marquis — Well! liberty will always preserve her last asylum — the scaffold.

Count — Gentlemen, there is something in all this that is not clear to me. I see very well that the Giboyer principle sacrifices liberty, but I ask myself how it saves equality. Of whom is the slave the equal? of a slave like himself. Is equality synonymous with slavery?

D'Aigremont — Haven't you thought over the responses of Giboyer to his boy?

Count — Precisely; and I find them ridiculous.

Marquis — It is true the author is kind in this place!

Count — Gentlemen, allow me to reread you this conversation, which absolutely prevents me from understanding anything about the social thesis of the future. The youthful Giboyer, moved by the speech he has just copied, exclaims: "I believe the only solid basis in the political order, as in the moral order, is faith — there!"

Marquis — "*There!*" delicious "*there!*" If he had said '*ere*, [baby-talk] it would be still finer. The youth is quite right, however.

Count — So it seems to me.

Marquis — What answers the senior Giboyer?

Count — Giboyer senior is stupefied : “*You are a Legitimist at present?*” The youth flinches : “*That doesn’t make one a Legitimist.*” “Yes it does,” responds Giboyer : “I know but one way of introducing faith into the political domain ; that is, to profess that all power comes from God, and consequently owes no accounting except to God. When a man professes that opinion, whatever party he thinks he belongs to, he is a Legitimist.” You see that here Giboyer discards the Christian notion of power ; as, for that matter, the entire play banishes Christianity entire by showing that it is no longer followed except by hypocrites, intriguers, and fools.

D’Aigremont — Exactly.

Count — The young Giboyer does not object that the society which professed that power comes from God, contrived also that power should render its accounts to God. He does not say that this society, which did itself the honor of not wishing to receive its masters except from heaven, was constituted, amply provided with laws, rules, privileges general and particular, and in a word had taken care that all puissance should not be allowed to all power. The young Giboyer is not sharp.

Couturier — If he said all that, he would lengthen out the scene too much. Besides, it must be arranged to have him beaten. Would you have him wiser than his father? That would be immoral. Be content that he is honest.

Count — Nevertheless, this necessity and this beauty of faith strike him so vividly that he exclaims, “Well, *let it go* that I am a Legitimist.”

Marquis — The fluctuation is very fine on the part of a lad whom the deficiencies of his civil status must inspire with so much repugnance for all legitimacy.

Count — Giboyer is bowled over. Life, he says, is stolen from under him. And he hurls at his son, his pupil, these distracted words : “Who has robbed me of you, *cruel boy?* Where did you escape me? *Who has perverted you?* There’s a woman back of all this ! You are no Legitimist, you’re in love !”

Marquis — Eloquent lamentations of a father who sees his son exposed to belief in God.

Count — In despair, Giboyer confesses his amazing infamy, and how he writes speeches not only to prove that he does not believe, but to combat what he believes and vilify what he

adores : "I have dishonored in my person a soldier of Truth, I am no longer worthy to serve her."

Marquis — Consequently I will continue to betray her.

Count — "But I owe her a substitute, and I promised myself it should be you."

Marquis — And by that means, I rehabilitate myself by betraying also those I serve by treason. He is august.

Count — The young Giboyer stands fast : "Your truth is no longer mine! The one I recognize is the one that dictated your speech." That is the moment to show that all power does not come from God, and how Christianity has cruelly abused humanity by persuading it of that error and the concordant errors, whence is born the monstrosity of the Christian monarchy. But the elder Giboyer, accused of Utopias, confines himself to exhibiting this maxim, rather crumpled by the immoderate use which millions of fools have made of it : "The worst of Utopias is the one that wants to make humanity retrace its steps."

Marquis — Bourdaloue !

Count — The young Giboyer objects that humanity may "mistake the road." He might add that humanity is not an absolutely mindless machine, and that if it is a machine, it is governed by free and intelligent beings. But the big Giboyer, abusing his power, crushes the little one with a second maxim, still more triumphant, "Rivers do not mistake, and they submerge the madmen who try to dam them back."

D'Aigremont — Turlupin !

Count — Thereupon the junior Giboyer breaks down. It does not come into his mind that rivers can be turned aside, dammed, diminished in volume. Decidedly, the boy is weak, in spite of "the *sterling* education" he has received ! Nevertheless he does not surrender. He thrusts at Giboyer a final argument, "In a word, you have nothing to put in place of what you have destroyed."

Marquis — That is very good, too. *In a word*, all the objections of the little rogue are insoluble.

D'Aigremont — But he does not stand fast.

Count — That is not his father's fault ! Giboyer makes him an answer in two parts, which I find doubly priceless. First part : "We have nothing ? And where have you seen *in history* that a society has replaced another without bringing into the world a superior dogma !" So Giboyer is to furnish us with



something superior to the Christian dogma, definitively discarded. Second part, "Antiquity did not admit equality before either human or divine law: the *Middle Ages* proclaimed it in heaven, '89 proclaimed it on earth." So the superior dogma of the society which is to replace the old society based on the Christian dogma is the Christian dogma of equality! Isn't that laughing at the public?

Marquis — No matter, it is a well-rounded period! I defy *whoever* to obtain tweezers fine enough to unsnarl the Bourdaloue from the Turlupin here. They are fused together.

Couturier — Oh, let the style alone! it is the equalitarian language. Equality would have Bourdaloue become identical with Turlupin. At the moment, take pains rather to discriminate the ideas; do not confound them where they are distinct. The equality of the Middle Ages and the equality of '89 are in no wise the same thing.

Count — Permit me! — It is M. Gibaugier I am speaking to?

Couturier — The same.

Count — Well, your distinction seems to me an empty one. If the equality of '89 is a development of the equality imposed on the pride of man by Christianity, you are mad in wishing to separate from the principle whence alone the equality flows. What is the use of enlarging the canal when you cut off the source? That men may consent to think themselves equal, they must needs avow themselves brothers; to avow themselves brothers, they must believe, they must fear, they must love the same God. I defy you to create belief, love, or fear of a God who is not He from whom all power comes and to whom all power must render account; He who created the heavens and the earth and who died on the cross; He who said to men, "I am your Father and you are my children;" the God Christ, in a word, of whom you will have no more. You will never bring into the world a God superior to Him! But if your equality of '89 is not that which Christ has given us, if it is something else, something which is not divine right and does not grasp the roots of faith in us, instantly your fabric of human equality finds athwart it the pride of the human heart, where formerly the sweetness of Christ made enter the love of the little ones and the poor, and which the fear of Him has restrained. Who is to maintain equality against the pride of man? Force? but that force, that sole guardian of equality, on the one hand swells the pride of its possessors, on the other

obliterates all pride in its victims. And then, it is what was just now said, it is slavery; it is equality under the feet of Cæsar, replacing equality in the bosom of God. *You* make humanity retrace its steps.

Couturier — The argument seems plausible enough; but you forget that the equality “which is not a level” will be saved by “hierarchy.”

Count — Yes, Giboyer declares that equality will be the application of the principle “*To each according to his works,*” which “is not incompatible with a hierarchy.” The little Giboyer objects that the principle is inapplicable: the big Giboyer replies that it is already applied, in part at least; that “the administration, the magistracy, the army, not to speak of the clergy, are actual hierarchies of merit, which have not budged for sixty years, and on which our revolutions have not dreamed of laying a hand —”

Marquis — The fact is, they have contented themselves with putting their foot on them.

Count — He adds this amazing balderdash: “And it is this problem half solved that they dare to proclaim insoluble! Instead of completing the edifice in its provisional parts, they declare it *stricken and vanquished* by decay, and prefer to trust themselves to ruins!” You see I have mastered my author. But may I marry Fernande — after three weeks’ widowhood — if I understand a word of it! Humanity is a river, equality is not a level! Equality will be realized by the application of the principle, “*To each according to his works;*” and there are already mechanisms for its application, which are the administration, the magistracy, and the army, — actual hierarchies of merit! What does all this mean? What have these alleged hierarchies to do here? And these hierarchies, mere ladders on which revolutions effect strange tumbles, what can they secure equality in? And that equality itself, what novelty does it offer if it is not a level? Please satisfy me on these points, M. Gibaugier.

Couturier — You are too curious, Count. But still, as you have sounded the depths of the social comedy, I will try to answer you. Tell me only — if you know — which are the “provisional parts of the edifice”? I don’t quite understand that.

Count — They are, I suppose, the parts not yet supplied with the hierarchy of merit which is to introduce equality

there. Property, for instance, seems to me entirely provisional. It is impossible that Giboyer should find it equitably distributed. Inheritance breeds stupidities. It is bad enough that the privileges of mind cannot be prevented from falling at random, without permitting them to found a fortune transmissible in its entirety — and to whom? What, the privilege of genius to be prolonged in favor of an idiot through the privilege of posterity! And that idiot may not only possess it, but transmit it in his turn! And my uncle, subscriber to the “crabs’ journal,” can leave an estate and investment income to me, — me, an extinguisher, — while Giboyer can only bequeath to the folder-girl’s son his immortal manuscript and the honor of his name!

D’Aigremont — That would be unrighteous. So we see the social comedy, prophet of future justice, makes all these heritages fall on Giboyer’s grandson.

Count — Very good; but that throws us back into aristocracy. Giboyer’s grandson will be a lord as under the old régime, for having put himself to the trouble of being born.

Marquis — Notice that he unites two bastardies, that of his dear papa and that of his dear mamma — which ought to count double, having sprung from adultery. Double or triple bastard — there’s merit for you! Something is really owed to such fine quarterings! Still, there is one point there which puzzles me, and makes me think the author has not read Giboyer’s book, or that Giboyer has not finished it.

D’Aigremont — That is what I think. In some modern comedy or other, a certain Mercadet, a business Giboyer, schooling some youth he wishes to place, recommends him to call himself a socialist. The youth does as he is told, understands nothing else about it, and yet ends by cutting a figure which impresses the bourgeois and is not displeasing to himself. Our author, so complacent over having written a social piece, to me represents that innocent. He has written a social piece, and it pleases the age well enough, without his being under obligation of deeper knowledge. And why should he take so much trouble, when the bourgeois are impressed? Don’t ask him about this or that. He has already answered you: “A *social piece*, hang it!”

Marquis — *Social piece* seems to me stronger than *cream tart*.

D’Aigremont — Incomparably. It answers much better for

everything. *Social* and not *political* piece, "whatever may be said of it ;" social piece "which attacks and defends only ideas, *an abstraction made*" (what rubbish !) "from all forms of government—" and all forms of ideas. To be sedulous of forms in government, and of form and logic instead of ideas in social matters, is the vulgar way. The poet hovers. His light descends from supreme heights : see clearly who can. Giboyer is not among the number of those who see perfectly. Giboyer is only a precursor. He still drags about the ideas of the Middle Ages ; and like all reformers of his species, who have scarce anything but their own personalities in view, he stops everything short at himself. Progress seems to him perfect when he can see himself in another's place. The Giboyers in the front rank of the hierarchy of merit ; no one above them but Caesar, who will lean on them ; the Pope the equal of M. Coquerel ; tribunals, an administration, gendarmes,—there you have everybody satisfied. Things go their little accustomed way, and the Giboyer dynasty, solidly established, is perpetuated after the ancient fashion.

Couturier — Well, doesn't this programme seem perfect to you, when you have added the great moral liberty which will result from the democratic theology ?

D'Aigremont — Perfect for Giboyer still simple and innocent, and already fed fat with hope ; but developments will take place which Giboyer does not count on. We can foresee that there will be an age limit for proprietorship and family headship, as for the military, the magistracy, and other functionaries. Logic will have it, equality exacts it, the slope is in that direction. The proprietor and the father of a family will have very little veneration, once despoiled of the guard of Christian virtues in them and around them ! By what right is this paltry individual to be owner, director, and master for a long lifetime, to the detriment of those who are waiting ? It is worthy of modern civilization to extend its empire even thus far, to regulate up to the very chances of fate and natural gifts, to introduce equality there. I defy you, the point of departure being given, to find that idea as impracticable as your Christian prejudices make you think at first sight. You will not be permitted to overstep a certain limit of fortune, nor enjoy it past a certain age. You will not be permitted to be superior in an art or a science. The ignoble impetus of envy will become the all-powerfulness of the law. Labor has already been very

efficaciously spent in realizing the level of characters: means will be found of procuring that of minds, of aptitudes, of geniuses. Gratuitous and obligatory education will do that; administrative regulations will perfect the work, and accomplish the subjugation and planing down of nature. What masters the world is a genius of incomparable stucco, the idiotic genius of equality. To-morrow, Giboyer will be a derided reactionary. Out of a new upheaval of equalitarian mud will spring a new Giboyer, who will scorn ours, and treat him as a dweller in the Middle Ages, a dullard still Christian. The future is Bedlam: it harbors treasures of abject silliness. Every one at birth will be thrown into the mill, stamped out with a die, put under the roller to make part of the infamous mechanism, and be able to receive no other destination. Inteligences will function as servilely as hands.

Couturier — You think yourself in China.

D'Aigremont — No, M. Gibaugier, I am in the Forum; I have the Imperial City under my eyes. Have you seen an infant school? There are children there of three or four who march, manœuvre, sing, stop, keep silence, to a whistle. It is a little regiment already. No more volition, no more spontaneity. When a turbulent genius manifests itself that makes the others laugh, — that is, distracts them, — he is immediately enveloped, extinguished, machinized. Make the infant school obligatory, — equality wills it: at the end of a few years you will no longer meet in the whole empire a solitary breaker of street lamps, nor a man to permit himself anything whatever that may displease the political power. We shall have men bold in all that authority ordains them, heroes and gymnasts who, naked, will scale fortresses bristling with cannon, but who will recognize nothing outside of authority, — neither fathers nor brothers nor God; and will feel themselves as crippled as if they had lost a limb from the moment they lose sight of their corporal or their policeman. And there will be no more art. The artist must produce a permit to have the right to sketch a lithograph; but if he has his permit, if he is in the hierarchy, he may paint temples whatever his merit: and woe to him who presumes to criticise the state painter! The same with men of letters: the success of a play, a book, an ode, will be made as a deputy is made. The certified author will go through victorious: he will have universal suffrage on his side.

Count — What frightful chimeras!

D'Aigremont — They are not chimeras: we are grazing the edge of reality.

Marquis — There is one thing very certain: that what the unsoundest heads have proposed of the maddest kind, we have seen take on a body and in a few years oppress the public reason.

D'Aigremont — Notice the profound disdain, the impudence, the ignorance with which to-day are treated the principles that have been steadily insulted for twenty-five or thirty years. Not to name too many authors, and not to multiply examples, take only the tranquil blasphemies of our social comedy. It has them against marriage, against the family, against society. It is not what is called "a thinker" who speaks in this way; it is a man of the world, who brings to the theater in all simplicity the language of the companies he frequents. Companies not very vulgar, because he is the point of contact between two greatnesses which do not love each other, but which feel in him what they have in common.

Marquis — Ah! the spirit of equality —

D'Aigremont — All this proves that the author, who seems to you taking pains to revolt the public conscience, does not even dream of it. Nothing suggests to him that he is wounding any living thing. Giboyer junior, the pure, finding himself loved by Fernande, cries out with fine taste, "Long live the good God!" He says it as he would say anything else, without meaning to be coarse and without purposing to surprise any one. It is the calm language of victory. Giboyer candidly takes the counter side from Christianity. If you wish to get an idea of the Giboyer civilization, start from that.

Marquis — You see, my poor dear boy, you who love liberty so much, — and you are right, — there are two spirits which must be obeyed in the world: the spirit of truth and the spirit of lying. Ingenious persons profess to be on the point of inventing a third, which will be composed of the first two: they are mistaken, and this pretended third spirit is only the spirit of falsehood, which is lying to them. The spirit of truth alone renders us free: the spirit of lying enslaves us. But we love it. When I say "us," I am speaking of our unhappy race. Falsehood has always known how to prepare a bread which we have found pleasing: *Suavis est homini panis mendacii*. You desire explanations as to the equalitarian hierarchies, and our friend Gibaugier is in no hurry to give them. To complete

M. d'Aigremont's remarks, I will confess that these hierarchies produce on me the effect of an optical illusion, designed to preserve distinctions under the name of equality ; as universal suffrage, the press, the tribune, and a quantity of other mechanisms, suitably disposed and regulated, seem to me designed to preserve power, and more than power, under the name of liberty. All these new names cover old things as well. Yet the name is not all that is new. These old things themselves have returned to the antique fashion, and that is what makes their novelty. Not every one is capable at first glance of recognizing faces that have been lost to sight for fifteen or eighteen hundred years. To-day pagan liberty and Cæsarian equality present themselves with an air of freshness.

Couturier — What more is needed ?

Count — Gentlemen, you may joke : for my part, I am not so easy in mind. All this frightens and angers me. What ! is the abjectness of the pagan world what we are going toward ?

D'Aigremont — My young friend, we are no longer going : it is a long time since we set out, and we are there. The waves alone are floating us into port. Ah, the good people who tell you humanity does not retrace its steps ! They would seem quite right, did we not know that God reserves the last word for Himself. During long ages, humanity, yielding to its divine guide, and sometimes even inflamed with love for Him, truly seemed and truly wished to retrace its steps. It abandoned slavery, idolatry, the worship of flesh ; it let itself be turned back from the gulf, it advanced toward the eternal springs. But the effort quickly exhausted its virtue. Wearied out, it rejected the guide that was showing it heaven. He persisted, it struck him ; he still persisted, it bound him ; and letting go the oar and furling the sail, gave up endeavor on the slope of the river of death. Here it is back again, proud of itself, on the brink of the gulf where the anchor of salvation had arrested it.

Count — No, we shall not fall in there ; no ! The anchor of the Cross will save us anew ; we shall still retrace our steps. We will not cast into the gulf, at the bidding of actors, honor, liberty, equality, all the gifts of our Christ. There will be a revolt of Christian blood against this project of eternal infamy !

D'Aigremont — I wish so. The revolters will not be numerous.

Count — Undeceive yourself. Outside of our ranks, more

hearts than you think for remain attached to that liberty which is being sacrificed. Are not impatience of the bridle, love of independence, the very characteristic of modern times?

D'Aigremont — One moment! In the luminous discussion between the two Giboyers, the father lays the blame on the "confusion of tongues." He is not far wrong. This certain sign of the decay of reason is visible everywhere, and Giboyer will provide no remedy, for it is his great means of success. As for us, let us follow to the end the counsel of St. Paul: preserve religiously the sanctity of words, which deeply concerns the sanctity of the mind. There is liberty and liberty. One of them was marked out formerly, whose sectaries were named, in good French, the *libertines*. That is not Christian liberty, which rescued the world by refusing to worship the gods of Caesar, and which developed equality by limiting itself through respect for the liberty of others. You say justly that the characteristic of the age is the hatred of the bridle and love of *independence*. Now, here is the trouble: the austere Christian liberty is not independence; on the contrary, it is a bridle. What do I say? it is *the* bridle. A bridle on the heart, a bridle on the mind, a bridle on the senses, a bridle on the whole man. If you hear a man spoken of as *unbridled*, does it give you the idea of an honest man? One would not say that even of Giboyer to do him honor. Yet what is Giboyer? An intelligent man who has thrown off the bridle, a vicious man who has made himself independent. But since vice must be honored, what has been done? A new twist of the tongue has been given. *Independent*, equivalent to *unbridled*, has become a synonym of "free," with something bolder and more honorable in it. Confusion of tongues, ruin of good sense! After having in his independence given being to the folder-girl's son, Giboyer, a dependant of hunger, practices the trades that you know; among others that trade of prisoner, which is not the vilest. Later, no one knows why, this independence becomes the slave of the paternal sentiment. He draws from the gutter the Moses of the democracy; he rears him by imposing ignoble labors on himself, but he has the honor of not resuming the divine bridle: rather ignominy than obedience, rather the convict guard than the angel guardian! As a virtue, this would be dependence: he has no virtue, he has a *turlutaine* which leaves him independent. This is all quite in keeping. A virtue might induce him to fashion only an honest man; with a

caprice, he is almost assured of making an object like unto himself, an *independent* who will belong to himself, who will not be *stolen* from him, — that is, will never believe in the right of God.

Marquis — There are currents of inspiration in the air which reveal themselves in a very strange manner. When Giboyer says to his son, “Who has stolen you from me, cruel boy?” he utters a sentence which was given forth by M. Proudhon. I read a booklet of his wherein he threatened to kill the priest who should attempt to *steal* one of his children from him, by interfering to baptize him.

D'Aigremont — Nothing more natural — in the unnatural order men are laboring to form. And all who are busying themselves with it must reach the same expression of the generatrix thought. To submit in no wise to the right of God, that is the serious basis of everything, the rock of philosophical liberty. The pride of man accepts no matter what humiliation, no matter what livery, no matter what chain: he will be a lackey, he will be a procurer, provided he may free himself from a personal and living God — that specter of the conscience, well says the same Proudhon. And truly, freed from God in himself, and no longer meeting him with others, man is God himself, whatever be the abjectness into which Fate has let him fall; he is God in every place where he finds himself strongest, whether by the vigor of his members or by the adroitness of his mind. Then he cheats, he steals, he crushes — he is free!

Marquis — Add that, even when reduced to servitude and in total impotence, philosophic independence does not abandon him: on one side, he emancipates himself from that irksome law of God that commands him to respect his masters, to pardon them, and to pray for them; on the other, he gives himself the precious right to hate, curse, and avenge himself.

D'Aigremont — Do you wish now for a precise definition of material independence, and will it please you to know just what it is worth? Listen to the sordid Giboyer. He comes back to it twice, as he does to that fine metaphor of licking the mud off his son's road, forgetting it is with that mud-laden tongue he is making court to him. In the first act he is speaking of going to America: — “If I go out there, at the end of six years I can bring back Maximilien three thousand francs yearly income, — *that is to say*, INDEPENDENCE.” In the third act, he

is editor-in-chief of the Clerical organ, finds himself rich, and presses Maximilien to leave his position. — We have, he says, a thousand francs a month. Maximilien, already not so simple, answers that that is not wealth. “Anyway,” rejoins Giboyer, “it is INDEPENDENCE.” The noble Maximilien makes no objection. Thus, for Giboyer fresh as for Giboyer gamy, independence is three thousand francs invested income at the lowest; and if you have a turlutaine, a thousand francs a month. In other words, it is the power of living without work, or of not working except at attractive labor. At present, my young friend, I exhort you to fight, and die if need be, for liberty and equality; you cannot make a better use of your life. But do not count more than moderately on the concurrence of those who love independence — and don’t tell them your secrets.

Marquis — Is that your sentiment, M. Gibaugier?

Couturier — Listen, I have done my best to bring out the democratic and social sense of the work: I have not taken an engagement to console you. I now hand in my resignation as judge-appointed counsel, and have nothing more to say to you except Pelissier’s words,¹ “If you are not satisfied, appeal to the Emperor.” But you, my Lord Marquis, have promised to show us a certain admirable something in this production of the current spirit. It seems to me the moment has come.

Marquis — It has come, indeed, with the accord on which I always counted, and I have only a résumé to make. But let me present to you first an idea which came to me just now while listening to M. d’Aigremont. In the month of May last, while on my way to Rome, I stopped a short time with our dear friend of Marseilles. He conducted me to his country-house, deep in flowers under the clear shadow of the pines. The beauty of the place is not unknown to you: you remember those rocks, that sea, from that solitude to the city gates. A chalet, but of marble; a castle terrace, the Mediterranean beneath the eyes, the hills in the distance: two horizons, the one of black points cut on the azure, the other of vague blues softly moving in the golden mist.

Count — I passed the month of December there, and it was delicious.

Marquis — That is nothing. The place must be seen in spring raiment. No one can imagine what riches the first sun of May scatters there, and what perfumes it sets burning.

¹ On prohibiting the representation of “Giboyer’s Son” in Algeria.

Accustomed to the tranquil opulence of oaks and grass, my Northern eyes were astonished. This nature is impetuous, like the man of the South, prodigal of deeds, of speeches, of vocal outbursts; tempests and songs. Long boughs spring out from the least indentations of the stone; they group themselves in clusters, twine in garlands, spread out in draperies; everything sparkles with flowers, all the flowers shed around their puissant aromas. Purple, gold, emerald, azure, snow; the symphony of colors is as full and strong as the harmony of perfumes. You are seized through all the senses at once. I asked our friend how he had managed not to pass his life in idling.

Count — Faith, uncle, your description makes me wish to return there for that sole object, and also to be guaranteed against the aspect of Giboyer, who should not remove far from the tobacco shops.

Marquis — Our friend replied that he knew well this propensity to do-nothingness. He added, smiling, that the delicious country-house hardly served as the goal of promenade. Built by the enthusiasm of youth, ornamented by the enthusiasm of art, and at last found too beautiful, it is practically abandoned. Men do not reside there on account of business; women do not wish to sojourn there because the church is too far off to have mass every day. Mass, which is the strength of poverty and the joy of easy circumstances, is the necessity of opulence. The day would be empty without that. There is what life teaches to Christians who grow old on roses.

D'Aigremont — Giboyer has no suspicion of it.

Marquis — There are so many things Giboyer has no suspicion of! As for me, reflecting on this, it seems to me that I have just touched the enduring root of the Eastern Question and of many other questions. In the Orient, the temptation to idle has been victorious. Man has lain in the shade, among the flowers, sword in hand; and, surrounded by trembling slaves and full of vices, he has dreamed away, full of fatigue and ennui. He has dreamed of delights more enervating, more silent; always spring, always moonlight, always young! There is the dream. During the dream the sword has fallen from the hand of the dreamer; and one day some one has come from the West to bring him not waking, but death. The slaves have remained, they have kissed the feet of the victors, soon themselves enfeebled and conquered by the Oriental dream.

Other Occidentals have come, have melted away, have attracted other invasions : all is engulfed in the bed of flowers. Rome has lain there, and with her the world. What would come if Christianity had not created a new Rome? What would come if that second Rome disappeared before the Koran of Giboyer? The decadence of mankind would begin again at the point where Christianity interrupted it ; matter would recover its empire ; the human race would be absorbed in nature and perish there.

D'Aigremont — I believe it ; and I even believe that consummation would come very quickly, seeing the abundance and vigor of the elements of destruction.

Marquis — Christianity alone holds us upright, by its perpetual repudiation of effeminacy and slavery. But it must be integral Christianity, that which gives us the real presence of the living God, the living word of the present God. Christianity breached by heretics is only a philosophy. It is powerless to combat that invasion of nature which finds in us so many ardent complicities. Liberty, dignity, so salutary and necessary, — Christianity must oppose them to us and above all impose them on us ; and it alone will do it, and it alone can do it. It would be nothing to prohibit us from having slaves, we must be prohibited from being such. They say the noblest aspiration of man is toward liberty : yes, and his most violent inclination is toward slavery ! He wishes to reduce others to it, he precipitates himself into it. The great business of man is to find a master. At what price does he not buy one ? What sacrifices does he not make for it ? *Thou shalt have no other God but God !* there is the first article of the divine law, and the first, the broadest, the only solid substratum of human liberty. That is what Giboyer effaces with scorn, under the name of divine right. Giboyer is not proposing so new a thing as he thinks. Read Scripture, and see the efforts of God against idolatry, the generating principle and the complement of slavery ; listen to the anathemas of Isaiah and the other prophets against the frenzy of making idols, and going to adore them under the terebinths, in the obliging shadows of the night ! Idolatry carries away everything : it reigns through the whole world, it reaches the perfection of prostrating the human race before an idol of flesh. The God Octavius was embarrassed with it, the God Tiberius was disgusted with it : “ O men made for slavery ! ” The others were no longer surprised by

it, thought no more of it. The God Claudius thought it very simple to have altars. The true God triumphed through His Christ; the divine commandment overthrew the infamous idol, and liberty was born. But idolatry has preserved temples on the earth, and the leaning toward slavery has remained in the heart of man. Rarely will it show itself there at once more skillful and more overflowing than to-day. It calls itself liberty, fraternity, equality. The "father of lies," father of slavery, is never embarrassed for want of false names! Whatever figure is given to the idol, the idolatry is easy to recognize; whatever name the spirit of slavery takes, its work against liberty is easily guessed. See your old liberals of the press and the tribune in view of Italy and Poland. Your humanitarians, your equalitarians, your fraternitarians, how all that mass has become "authoritarian" and tranquilly sees human flesh carved up! How it all frankly battens on apostasy! Are they rather indulgent to every work of robbers and executioners, rather deaf to every cry of the victims? Do you believe they can ever be revolted, and that the fecund spirit of tyranny can manage to invent an outrage which will decide them to compromise their personal "independence" of five hundred or a thousand francs a month? There they are, these *lads* who would eat a martyr for a modest compensation! Without increase of wages, for nothing, for pleasure, for honor, if the executioner judges it opportune that the martyr shall be defamed, they are ready! Let the spirit of slavery alone: should it succeed in depriving Christianity of the character of a social institution, and reduce it to being nothing more than a philosophy, very soon Claudius will have priests, and very soon the Giboyer breed itself, crouching under the rod, will cultivate ill-gotten gardens for others. Ah, Giboyer, my friend, you write speeches against the temporal power of the Papacy, to advance the triumph of equality and to acquire "an independence" which will permit you not to be an honest man. You will be disappointed, Giboyer! Your son will be reduced to equality just like us, or will finish by paying Peter's Penny like us, because if he does not know that the Pope guards his soul, he will be forced to understand at least that the Pope guards his cash-box and his house.

Couturier — Thank you, Marquis, for this philosophy of history. It is not what the *Revue des Deux Mondes* teaches me. M. Buloz's people do not think they need Christ as much

as you. They think, on the average, they can arrange everything without him. M. Buloz has his points of view, you have a perfect right to have yours. Just now I wish to know Giboyer's merits.

Marquis — You have described them almost all yourself, my dear friend, and I doubt whether the author would have rated them at a higher figure, in public or private. First, gentlemen, let us render justice to the name "Giboyer." I admire it very sincerely. They are making us a new French, which — pardon the expression — talks all by itself, and brings us savors that noble idiom seemed incapable of harboring. *Giboyer!* We also have *The Ganaches*. What titles for comedies! There is no need even of going to see them. You feel, that is to say, you know at once what they will be about. There is the nineteenth century, there is scorn, derision, debasement of language, a certain sign of other debasements; in a word, there is democracy! This name *Giboyer* added to the French of the future, I call a stroke of genius. There is potency in it. Confess that the most wholesale enemy of modern innovations and all their promises could not better have baptized the human type of these hateful charlatanries. Formerly a Frenchman was called Jacques Bonhomme or Montmorency: at present he is Giboyer; *Maximilien* Giboyer! Note the given name, which is Robespierre's: through that, Giboyer is linked to the fathers of '93. If this feature was not meant, it is there. Now the piece is full of features of this kind, which go straight against the intentions of the author. That is the grand merit I see in it. From one end to the other the author has had the inspirations of Balaam, with this difference: that Balaam, sent to curse, blessed; while he, who wishes to bless, curses. He is the Balaam of democracy: he belittles it, befouls it, and renders it hateful. He makes it the daughter of Giboyer, the bastard of Giboyer, infected in its source, ignoble in its manners and its language, silly in its conceptions, incapable of withstanding the shock of reasoning. He gives it only a ridiculous triumph, a victory over puppets. Like the devil, he carries away none but lost souls, — an old rake, an old fool; he carries them off, he does not conquer them: they belonged to him already, the one by his vices, the other by his imbecility. If I had been tempted by democracy, the reading of this piece would have saved me. It is a *reductio ad absurdum* of the amazing intellectual and moral wretchednesses of the democratic school, and the still

shining superiorities of Christian society, even in the state of decadence to which it has fallen. I know too well that this demonstration will be wasted on the great public, that it will not comprehend, that so many incredible avowals will not open its eyes. Couturier has told us rightly: the mob is in it, with its unwillingness to see things except in that falsehood and that absurdity in which the courtiers of the democracy take care to show them to it, to humor its jealousy. No matter, the demonstration is perfect for me, for us; and I think there are still some proud souls it will enlighten and fortify against the violence of the democratic torrent.

D'Aigremont — Do you really expect it?

Marquis — Yes. I see more than one spirit, upright but troubled by the evils of the time, to whom Giboyer will be salutary. I will go farther, and to express my entire feeling to you by a Giboyer metaphor, I regard all this as an abscess which is breaking on the outside. It is ugly, it is afflicting, I admit; but the broken spot is wholesome. Success is a formidable thing to the human conscience. Numbers of honest men are always tempted to believe that successes repeated, shining, durable, cannot but repose on a foundation of justice; that everything victorious is of necessity endowed with genius and even virtue, that every triumphant idea bears in itself the true and the great. Well, there; look; see *what they have in their belly*: another fine metaphor of this age, to express whence come and whither tend the aspirations of modern man, and another feature of ancient origin! The philosophers hostile to new-born Christianity had something too, and even everything, in their bellies. St. Paul said of them, "*Whose god is their belly.*" But indeed, there are men left who have something in their hearts and their heads. The brutal shock stirs up, angers, inflames this something Christian. In truth, there is something irritating in it, because the action is full of violence and insult; but as after all there is no dishonor in being harried by the police, my judgment is that we ought rather to thank the police-hand that buffets us with this morsel of authorized literature. Ah! is *there* the best you have to offer us against our principles? is there your art, is there your language, are those your ideas and your social conceptions? Thanks a thousand times, and we are charmed to have the basis of your views and your counsels! Well, but, all shattered as we are, all dismantled by your victories, all perverted by your

examples, frivolous, forgetful of our duties, miserably dazzled by your fortunes, miserably led astray by your entertainments, we are still worth more than you, and we are intellectually and morally stronger. We cherish a deposit of living and august truths which your insolences but further endear to us. Your Giboyer, your pontiff, your saint, whom yourselves proclaim a blackguard, is no doubt a blackguard, and that physiognomy alone, for which we do not know how to thank you enough, spoils him for us; but he has another slight defect which you do not perceive: he is a dunce, this fine genius! He knows English, he can write in many tongues, he can plead pro and con, he can lick the mud off his son's steps, but he cannot clean the mud off his own heart: he is a dunce! He could write a fine book, he could not become an honest man; he can force the people who buy him to pay more for him, he is ignorant of the art of forcing them to honor him, he has no hold there, and his own son honors him only on the ground of having been produced by him: he is a dunce! He can gain an independence of three thousand francs a year, but his pupil already needs an independence of a thousand francs a month: he is a dunce! He turns mute, ticket taker, puts the Clerical chain around his neck, — he, a democrat, — when he has all he needs, without changing his style or his linen, to earn his living on the Belgian papers of his natural stripe: he is an absolute dunce! This Diogenes clad in dirt talks to us of organizing equality, as if he himself, in order to be everybody's equal, had anything to do but take a bath! I ask of you if it needs so much talent and honesty to make a personage? But no, Master Giboyer must cherish his odor and his apparel; he means to enter the Senate in working clothes, and without being obliged to leave his pipe with the sergeant-at-arms! — I tell you he is a dunce, and that it will be perceived.

D'Aigremont — Alas! I doubt it.

Marquis — I augur better of the world. We have spoken our thought of it freely enough: things occur there which I see and hold in abhorrence. Nevertheless, I do not mark there the supreme and decisive character of death, inertia of good. After all, the epoch has life; and that struggle which comedy cannot show, exists.

D'Aigremont — I don't know. I doubt whether we shall make a brilliant figure in history. Undertakings are not lacking, I admit, nor parade, nor hubbub. We excite ourselves

greatly, or at least we are very much stirred up by very powerful machines. There are bustle, smoke, cantatas — mirlitons.¹ The plaster assumes grandiose forms ; it rises, it rises ! You hear at intervals immense hullabaloes, tempests of acclamations, gusts and hurricanes of laughter. Are there works finding accomplishment, doctrines in collision, solutions being wrought out ? Is it life, or is it nothing ? In this throng you need a magnifying-glass to discern a face ; in this uproar you need an ear-trumpet to hear a voice. For an instant you turn away your gaze from the plaster which was just now reared aloft : the eye returns thither and sees it no more. It was an illusion of a structure, its fall has produced the illusion of a collapse. On to another ! Will our fecundity, which a great voice has called fecundity of abortions, bring forth at last anything but illusions ? Will our industry leave us even ruins ? Questions ! Booths arise on all sides ; we rush to them with an eager desire to be amused. Are we amused ? A question ! A terrible question ! At bottom, the human species, confined no longer by faith, but by threads of iron, and crowded together before the same spectacles, is no more satisfied with its buffoons than with its great men : it despises and is bored. Beware ! There is something more dismal than the bellowing of the people, and that is its yawning. All may end by a terrible slumber on a terrible ruin.

Marquis — I don't say no. It will be as God wills. He has weighed the repentances and the hardenings, the good purposes and the bad actions, the prayers and the blasphemies. I appeal to that Judge, for the nations of the earth as for myself. To each according to his works ! To die of Giboyer would be a villainous death. It is possible, and it would be deserved. Yet even in this situation, I say the author of "Giboyer" does us honor and may do us good. He does us honor in defaming us. He is constrained to defame us, to show us other than we are, and finally to confront us with his hero to abase us before him. With the characters that observation might furnish him, if he took the champions of the "ancient principle" as they are, his piece would be no longer possible, any more than with his hero such as he is in nature. In vain he undervalues and derides the old virtue of the ancient régime : he has to have a Giboyer who holds to that virtue, and in whom the *turlutaine* produces certain effects of the old

¹ See note, page 133.

repentance ; who could turn father after having forgotten for six years that he was one ; who even wished to be a husband, and was prevented only by the death of the folder-giri ; who is laborious, sober, devoted, all that the Giboyer *nature* would not be, cares nothing for being, and is not. This therefore cannot but be useful to us, by proving to us that our old virtue still has some good in it, since Giboyer is only presentable on condition of bearing at least the reflection of it. Let us sedulously gather up the vaticinations of the most recent prophet of the democracy, and persuade ourselves fully that in spite of the discredit with which honest people may seem stricken before him, he still has to resemble them in some fashion to obtain their homages. Assuredly the creator of Maximilien Giboyer, reared to become the delight of the human race — and to pettifog before justices, or do publishers' copying at forty francs a sheet in a garret, or serve as secretary to the deputy Maréchal, — assuredly, I say, the creator of this jewel would not be willing to aver that he despises Fitz-James and La Bourdonnais, naval second lieutenants ; or Crussol, Gitaut, and a hundred other cavalry second lieutenants ; or Sanbran, Rohan-Chabot, Gontaud-Biron, Puységur, Tournon, La Guiche, De Maistre, Renneville, and all the papal soldiers I could name, although these Clericals, the majority educated by M. de Sainte-Agathe, were provided with a legitimate father. I fancy also that Vogüé, though great in Spain and absolutely incapable of making a speech against the temporal power, would not seem to him over rash in opposing his book on the Holy Land to the publishers' work of the younger Giboyer. What shall I tell you ? I go as far as to believe, in a word, that the Balaam of the democracy, when he shall sit in our political assemblies, will not vote for the exclusion of whoever shall have married a woman before having issue by her, or shall not have left his solitary son to knock about anywhere and everywhere for at least six years. Well, with that and the first communion, we can maintain ourselves and do something yet. We can at least manage to sow seed. My dear D'Aigremont, even should we limit our hopes to that, let us profit by Giboyer's stumblings, and do *not* let us fall into democratic manners. [*To the COUNT.*] You especially, my dear boy, will witness spectacles probably spared to my eyes, — I have seen enough already ! — keep pure and preserve from weevils the grain which will be buried only to cover the earth with an abundant harvest.

Count — Make yourself easy, uncle. Giboyer does not allure me and does not make me afraid. Without being too presumptuous, I feel myself of courage and even of stature to confront him everywhere.

Couturier —

“ We shall not die alone, nor be unfollowed.”

Count Hugues, when you were a very little child, and I a very little superintendent in the iron-works of your uncle, who persisted in making my fortune, I predicted that you could not be prevented from carrying a musket.

Marquis — Oh, here! why don't they call us to dinner?

[*Bell rings.*]

Maximilien [*drunk*] — Your Lordship, it's there.

Marquis — What do you mean by “ It's there ”?

Maximilien — Why, it's there on the table. Dinner's ready, that's it.

Count — He is drunk.

Marquis — Maximilien, have you seen Father Giboyer to-day?

Maximilien — What's he say he's my father for! — It ain't my fault. — I've got to see my father, for he says he give me my education.

Marquis — I ordered you every time you had seen Father Giboyer to go to bed, and not appear before me again till the next day.

Maximilien — And how about my work? I've got to get that done! I won't steal my wages!

Marquis — You see, gentlemen, everywhere the old principles. Oh, Giboyer hasn't put an end to them! [*To MAXIMILIEN.*] Go to bed. And, gentlemen, let us go to dinner.

[*They go out.*]

Maximilien [*alone*] — Old duffers! — For all that, he's got no sense, him that calls himself my father. He makes me drink evenings, and that gets me caught. — And it's always me that pays for it! I don't think that's right.

SOCIETY WHERE THEY ARE BORED.

By ÉDOUARD PAILLERON.

(Translated for this work.)

[ÉDOUARD PAILLERON, the most conspicuous of contemporary French dramatists, was born at Paris, September 17, 1834. He began his mature life as a notary's clerk, and did not make literature a profession till 1860, when he produced a volume of satires in verse, "The Parasites," and a one-act comedy, "The Parasite." "The Partition Wall," verse comedy, followed in 1861, and "The Last Quarter" (of a wedding trip), ditto, in 1863, with good success. "The Second Movement," verse comedy, was coolly received in 1865; but in 1868, "Society where they Amuse Themselves," one-act prose, was beautifully costumed and quite successful. "False Households," verse drama, came in 1869; "Hélène," ditto, in 1872; "The Other Motive," prose comedy, in 1872; "Little Rain," prose comedy, in 1875; "The Sparkle" and "The Ungrateful Age," prose comedies, in 1879; "Chevalier Trumeau," verse comedy, 1880; "During the Ball," verse comedy, 1881; then in 1881 his masterpiece, still holding the stage, "Society where they are Bored," which gave him the election to the Academy in 1882. He followed it with "The Narcotic," verse comedy, 1882, and "The Mouse," prose comedy, 1887; and then nothing more of moment till 1893, when "The Cabotins" [barn-stormers] repeated the sensation of "Society where they are Bored." Since then he has produced nothing but in 1896 two short comedies illustrating maxims of conduct, known in France as *proverbes*. He had previously written several volumes of poems, and in 1886 "Academic Discourses." He married a daughter of François Buloz, the founder of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, and wrote several articles for it.]

ACT I.

Scene: A square drawing-room with door at the rear opening on another large drawing-room. Doors in the first and third wings. On the left, between the doors, a piano. Door at the right in the first wing; on the same side, higher up, a large bay with glazed vestibule giving on the garden; on the left, a table with a chair on each side; on the right, a small table, and a sofa, chairs, etc.

SCENE I.

François [searching through the papers that load the table] — It can't be on top of that either; nor inside of that: *Revue Materialiste* — *Revue des Cours* — *Journal des Savants* —

Enter LUCY WATSON.

Lucy — Well, François, have you found that letter?

François — No, Miss Lucy, not yet.

Lucy — Opened, no envelope, on pink paper?

François — Was Miss Watson's name on it?

Lucy — Did I tell you it was to me?

François — But —

Lucy — Then you haven't found anything?

François — Not yet, but I'll hunt, I'll inquire —

Lucy — No, don't inquire: there's no need of it! Only keep hunting, for I must have it. From the place where you handed us the letters this morning as far as the drawing-room. It can't have dropped anywhere else — search! search!

SCENE II.

François [*alone, returning to the table*] — “Search! search!”
Revue Coloniale! Revue Diplomatique! Revue Archéologique —

Enter PAUL and JEANNE RAYMOND.

Jeanne [*gayly*] — Ah, there's somebody! [*To FRANÇOIS.*]
Is Mme. de Cérans —

Paul [*pressing her hand, whispers*] — Hush! [*To FRANÇOIS, with dignity.*] Is the Countess of Cérans in the château at present?

François — Yes, sir.

Jeanne [*gayly*] — Well, go and tell her that M. and Mme. Paul —

Paul [*same performance, coldly*] — Have the kindness to notify her that M. Raymond, sub-prefect of Agenis, and Mme. Raymond have arrived in Paris, and await her in the drawing-room.

Jeanne — And that —

Paul [*as before*] — Hush! [*To FRANÇOIS.*] Go on, my good fellow.

François — Yes, M. Sub-Prefect. [*Aside.*] They are just married. [*Aloud.*] Will M. Sub-Prefect take off his things?

[*Takes the guests' coats and wraps and goes out.*]

Jeanne — Oh, come! Why, Paul —

Paul — Not “Paul” here; “M. Raymond.”

Jeanne — What? Thou wishest —

Paul — Not *thou* here: *you*, I told you.

Jeanne [*laughing*] — Oh, such a face!

Paul — No laughing here, please.

Jeanne — Really, sir, are you going to scold me?

[*Throws her arms around his neck; he disengages himself in terror.*]

Paul — Bad girl! it only needed that!

Jeanne — Oh, you make me weary!

Paul — *Pre-cisely*! That time you struck the note! Come now! have you forgotten all I told you on the railroad?

Jeanne — I thought you were just joking.

Paul — Joking! in this place? Look here, do you want to be Madame Prefect: yes or no?

Jeanne — Yes, if it gives thee¹ pleasure.

Paul — Well, look here, please; look here, thou — I still say *thou* sometimes, because we are alone; but shortly, before folks, it will be *you* all the time — *you*! The Countess of Céran has done me the honor to invite me to present my new wife to her, and to pass some days at her St. Germain château. Now Mme. de Céran's salon is one of the three or four most influential salons of Paris. We are not here to amuse ourselves. We come in as sub-prefect, we must go out as prefect. Everything depends on her, on us, on thee!

Jeanne — On me? How on me?

Paul — Certainly. The world judges a man by his wife. And it is right. And that's why you must be on your guard! Gravity without superciliousness, a smile full of thought; look sharp, hear a lot, speak little! Oh, compliments to be sure, as many as you like; and quotations too would be a good idea, but short and profound, — in philosophy, Hegel; in literature, Jean Paul; in politics —

Jeanne — But I don't talk politics.

Paul — All the women talk politics here.

Jeanne — I don't understand a bit of it.

Paul — No more do they. That's no matter: keep right on! Quote Pufendorf and Machiavelli as if they were relatives of yours, and the Council of Trent as if you had presided over it. As for relaxations, — music in your room, a stroll in the garden, and whist, are all I'll allow you. With that, high-necked dresses, and the few words of Latin I have put you up to, I expect them inside of a week to be saying about you, "Ah, ha! that little Mme. Raymond will be a Minister's wife." And in this society, mind you, when they say of a woman that she is just the wife for a Minister, her husband is pretty near being one.

¹ It will be understood that the perpetual contrast between the familiar or condescending *tu* and the customary *vous* cannot be fully rendered; that where it forms the entire point of a remark, it is given there and near by for intelligibility.

Jeanne — Why do you want to be a Minister?

Paul — Oh, merely so as not to attract notice.

Jeanne — But Mme. de Céran is on the Opposition side, so what office can you expect out of it?

Paul — Sweet innocence! In the matter of offices, my dear, there is only one shade of difference between the Government and the Opposition: the Government party demand them, and the Opposition party accept them. No, no! I tell you that it is just here that reputations, situations, and elections are made, unmade, and over-made, or under color of literature and fine arts the knifers get in their work; it is here that's the little door of ministries, the ante-room of academies, the laboratory of success.

Jeanne — Mercy on me! What is this society?

Paul — This society, my dear, is a Hotel de Rambouillet¹ in 1881: a society where they talk and they pose, where pedantry takes the place of learning, sentimentality of feeling, and preciosity of delicacy; where they never say what they think, and never think what they say; where personal attention is wire-pulling, friendship a calculation, and even gallantry a means; where one swallows his cane in the anteroom [for stiffness] and his tongue in the drawing-room: the serious world, in a nutshell!

Jeanne — But that is the society where they are bored.

Paul — Precisely.

Jeanne — But if they are bored there, what influence can it have?

Paul — "What influence!" — Oh, simplicity, simplicity! what influence has boredom with us? — Why, enormous! why, most eminent! The Frenchman, mind you, has a horror of boredom that reaches to actual veneration. To him, Boredom is a terrible god who has full-dress for his worship. He doesn't comprehend the serious except under that form. I don't say he practices it, to be sure, but he only believes in it the more firmly: he likes better to believe in it — than to go and see it. Yes, this gay people despises itself at bottom for being so; it has lost faith in the good sense of its old laughter: this skeptical and talkative people believes in the mutes, this expansive and genial people lets itself be imposed on by the pedantic owl-ishness and the pretentious emptiness of the pontiffs of the

¹ The famous circle of the Marquis de Rambouillet, early in the seventeenth century, which powerfully affected the literature and politics of France.

white cravat : in politics as in science, as in art, as in literature, as in everything ! It sneers at them, it hates them, it flees them like a pestilence, but they alone have its secret admiration and its absolute confidence ! What influence has boredom ? Oh, my dear child ! Why, it comes to this, that there are only two sorts of people in the world : those who won't be bored and who are nothing, and those who will be bored and who are everything — next to those who can bore other people !

Jeanne — And *that* is where you have brought me, you bad boy !

Paul — Do you want to be prefect ? yes or no ?

Jeanne — Oh ! in the first place, I never could —

Paul — Pshaw ! there's only a week of it to stand.

Jeanne — A week ! without talking, without laughing, without kissing you.

Paul — Before folks ; but when we are alone — and then in corners — come, behave ! — just the contrary, it will be charming : I will give you appointments — in the garden — everywhere — as it was before we were married — at your father's, you know — ?

Jeanne — Hm ! all the same — all the same — [*opens the piano and plays an air from "La Fille de Madame Angot."*]

Paul [*in terror*] — Oh my ! oh my ! what are you doing there ?

Jeanne — It's from that new operetta.

Paul — Rattle-head ! that's how you profit —

Jeanne — Both of us in an opera-box — O Paul ! it was so lovely.

Paul — *Jeanne* — but, *Jeanne*, if anybody should come — do you want — [*FRANÇOIS appears at the farther end.*] Too late !

[*JEANNE changes the operetta air into a symphony from Beethoven.*]

Paul [*aside*] : Beethoven — bravo ! [*Follows the measure with a profound air.*] Ah ! decidedly, there's no music but that of the Conservatory.

SCENE III.

François — The Countess begs the Sub-Prefect to wait five minutes for her : she is in conference with the Baron Eriel de Saint-Réault.

Paul — The Orientalist?

François — I don't know, monsieur: it is the savant whose father had so much talent —

Paul [*aside*] — And who holds so many offices. That's good. [*Aloud.*] Ah! M. de Saint-Réault is in the château — and Madame de Saint-Réault, too, of course?

François — Yes, M. Sub-Prefect, and so are the Marquise de Loudan and Mme. Arriego; but those ladies are just this moment in Paris, at M. de Bellac's course, with Mlle. Suzanne de Villiers.

Paul — And there are no other ladies residing here?

François — There is the Duchess de Réville, Madame's aunt.

Paul — Oh, I wasn't speaking of the Duchess, nor Miss Watson, nor Mlle. de Villiers — they are members of the household — but of strangers like us.

François — No, M. Sub-Prefect, those are all.

Paul — And they are not expecting anybody?

François — Anybody? — Yes, M. Sub-Prefect: M. Roger, the son of the Countess, is to get home this very day from his scientific mission in the East; they are expecting him every moment — oh! and then M. Bellac, the professor, who is going to put up here for some time when his lecture course is through; at least they hope so.

Paul [*aside*] — So that's why there are so many ladies here. [*Aloud.*] Thank you, that's all.

François — Then M. Sub-Prefect will wait?

Paul — Yes, and tell the Countess not to incommode herself.

SCENE IV.

Paul — Ah-h-h! How you terrified me with your music! But you got yourself out of it first-rate. Bravo! To change Lecocq into Beethoven — that was pretty strong!

Jeanne — I am so stupid, a'n't I?

Paul — Oh, how well I know you're not! Well, as we've got five minutes yet, one word about the people here: that is mere prudence.

Jeanne — Oh, no more now!

Paul — Come, Jeanne, five minutes! These lessons are indispensable.

Jeanne — Then after each lesson you must kiss me.

Paul — Well, all right — there, what a child! Oh, come, it won't take long! — the mother, the son, the friend, and the invited guests, — neither men nor women, all serious people.

Jeanne — Well, that's a cheerful prospect.

Paul — Reassure yourself! there are two of them that are not that — serious. I have kept them for you till the last.

Jeanne — Wait — pay me first! [*Counts on her fingers.*] Mme de Céran, one; her son Roger, two; Miss Lucy, three; two Saint-Réaults; one Bellac; one Loudan and one Arriégo — that makes eight. [*Holds up her face.*]

Paul — Eight what?

Jeanne — Eight lessons, to be sure: come, pay up.

[*Holds up her face.*]

Paul — What a child! — There! there! there!

[*Kisses her again and again.*]

Jeanne — Oh, not so fast: retail! retail!

Paul [*after kissing her more slowly*] — There! are you satisfied?

Jeanne — I can wait. Tell me about the two that are not serious now.

Paul — First, the Duchess de Réville, the aunt in the succession: a handsome old lady who has been a handsome woman —

Jeanne [*with an interrogative air*] — Hm?

Paul — They say so. A little hare-brained, and strong on — speeches, but excellent, with good sense — you'll see. And last, for the bouquet [of the fireworks], Suzanne de Villiers. Oh, she is not serious a bit, indeed; not serious enough.

Jeanne — In a word —?

Paul — A raw girl of eighteen, an awkward, loose-tongued parcel, with audacities of behavior and language — oh, but — and whose history is a whole romance.

Jeanne — That's just the thing! Oh, goody! Go on!

Paul — She is the daughter of a certain widow —

Jeanne [*in the same tone as before, but louder*] — Mph?

Paul — Well, a widow! — and of the late De Georges de Villiers, another nephew of the Duchess, whom she adored. A natural daughter, therefore.

Jeanne — Natural? Oh, but this is delicious!

Paul — The mother is dead, the father is dead. The little girl was left alone at twelve, with a fast-man's heredity and an education to match. Georges taught her Javanese. The

Duchess, who is daft about her, brought her to Mme. de Céran's, who detests her, and had Roger given her for a tutor. They have tried sending her to a convent, but she escaped from it twice; they sent her back a third time, and here she is! Judge of the effect in this house! Fireworks by moonlight. Well, I'm through, I hope: that's nice, isn't it?

Jeanne — So nice that I'll forgive you the two kisses you owe me —

Paul [*disappointedly*] — Oh!

Jeanne — And I'll give them to you instead. [*Kisses him.*]

Paul — You crazy creature! [*The door at the farther end opens.*] Oh! Saint-Réault and Mme. de Céran. Breathe in my eye! — No, they didn't see us. — Be careful, now! Hm! Be on your guard!

SCENE V.

MME. DE CÉRAN and SAINT-REULT are chatting in the doorway without seeing PAUL and JEANNE.

Mme. de Céran — No, my friend! not on the first ballot, you understand! 15-8-15 on the first ballot. — There is a first ballot, and consequently a second ballot: that's simple enough.

Saint-Réault — Simple! simple! On the second ballot, as I have only four votes on the second ballot, with your nine votes on the first ballot, that only makes thirteen on the second ballot.

Mme. de Céran — And our seven on the first ballot, that makes twenty on the second ballot: don't you see?

Saint-Réault [*seeing the point*] — Ha!

Paul [*to JEANNE*] — It's ever so simple.

Mme. de Céran — But —! I repeat, be attentive to Dalibert and the Liberals. The Academy is Liberal at this moment. [*Insisting.*] At this moment. [*They come down front, talking.*]

Saint-Réault — Isn't Revel also a director in the Junior School?

Mme. de Céran [*eying him sharply*] — Well? — Revel is not dead, that I know of.

Saint-Réault — Why, no.

Mme. de Céran [*as before*] — Nor sick, is he?

Saint-Réault [*rather embarrassed*] — Oh, sick — he's always that.

Mme. de Céran — Well, what then?

Saint-Réault — Why, we ought to be ready — who knows — ? I'm going to keep my eye out.

Mme. de Céran [*aside*] — There's something back of this. [*Noticing RAYMOND, and going to him.*] Ah, my dear M. Raymond, I was forgetting you : pardon me.

Paul — Ah, Countess ! [*Presenting JEANNE to her.*] Mme. Paul Raymond.

Mme. de Céran — Welcome to my house, madame. You are with a friend here. [*Presenting them to SAINT-REAUULT and him to them.*] M. Paul Raymond, sub-prefect of Agenis ; Mme. Paul Raymond : Baron Eriel de Saint-Réault.

Paul — I am the more happy in being presented to you, Baron, as in my youth I had the honor of knowing your illustrious father. [*Aside.*] He plucked me on my baccalaureate.

Saint-Réault [*saluting*] — Very happy, M. Prefect, in this coincidence.

Paul — Less than I am, Baron ; at any rate, less proud.

[*SAINT-REAUULT goes to the table and writes.*]

Mme. de Céran [*to JEANNE*] — You will find my house perhaps a little austere for your youth, madame : you must blame no one but your husband if your sojourn here involves some monotony, and console yourself by reflecting that to submit is to obey, and that in coming here you were not free.

Jeanne [*gravely*] — In what, Countess ? To be free is not to do what we like, but what we think for the best — as the philosopher Joubert says.

Mme. de Céran [*looking approvingly at PAUL*] — That is a sentence which reassures me, my dear. Besides, however purely intellectual may be the movement in my salon, it is not without attraction for elevated spirits. And by the way, the soirée to-day will be particularly interesting. M. de Saint-Réault is to read us an extract from his unpublished work on Rama-Ravana and the Sanskrit legends.

Paul — Really ! Oh, Jeanne !

Jeanne — How fortunate !

Mme. de Céran — After which, I think I can promise you something from M. Bellac.

Jeanne — The Professor !

Mme. de Céran — Do you know him ?

Jeanne — What lady does not know him ? Oh, that will be charming !

Mme. de Céran — A familiar talk, *ad usum mundi*, — a few

words only, but rare fruit; and lastly, to conclude, the reading of an unpublished piece.

Paul — Oh! in verse, perhaps?

Mme. de Céran — Yes, the first work of a young unknown poet whom they will present to me this evening, and whose work is to be accepted by the Théâtre Français.

Paul — These are pieces of good fortune which the refined encounter only with you, Countess.

Mme. de Céran [*to JEANNE*] — Does not all this literature frighten you a little, madame? For the truth is that a soirée like this is so much lost to your beauty.

Jeanne [*gravely*] — What the vulgar call time lost is very often time gained, as M. de Tocqueville says!

Mme. de Céran [*looking at her in astonishment, says in a low voice to PAUL*] — She is charming! [*SAINT-REAULT rises and goes toward the door.*] Why, Saint-Réault, are you going?

Saint-Réault [*as he goes*] — To the station: excuse me. A telegram — I shall be back in ten minutes.

Mme. de Céran — There is certainly something — [*Searches on the table. — To JEANNE and PAUL.*] Pardon! [*Rings; FRANÇOIS appears.*] The newspapers?

François — M. de Saint-Réault took them this morning, your Ladyship. They are in his room.

Paul [*drawing the Journal Amusant from his pocket*] — If you would be pleased, Countess —

[*JEANNE stops him abruptly, draws the Journal des Débats from her own, and hands it to Mme. de Céran.*]

Jeanne — It is to-day's.

Mme. de Céran — With pleasure — I am curious — pardon me again. [*Opens the paper and reads.*]

Paul [*low, to his wife*] — Bravo! Good enough! Keep on! That Joubert was exquisite! and the Tocqueville! Why, how —

Jeanne [*low*] — It isn't De Tocqueville, it's myself.

Paul — Oh!

Mme. de Céran [*reading*] — "Revel very sick." There now! I was sure! Saint-Réault doesn't lose any time. [*Passing the journal to PAUL.*] I have learned what I wished to know — thank you. I will not detain you: you will be shown your rooms. We dine at six precisely: the Duchess is very exact, you know. At four, consommé; at five, a walk; at six, dinner. [*Four o'clock strikes.*] And stay, there is four now.

SCENE VI.

The DUCHESS enters, followed by FRANÇOIS who places her arm-chair and tapestry basket, and a Chambermaid who carries the consommé. She sits down in the easy-chair prepared for her.

Mme. de Céran — My dear aunt, allow me to present to you —

Duchess [installing herself] — Wait a minute — wait a minute. There! Now — present who to me? [*Looks through her double eyeglass.*] It isn't Raymond, I don't suppose? I've known him this many a year.

Paul [advancing with JEANNE] — No, Duchess; but Mme. Paul Raymond, his wife, if you please.

Duchess [eying over JEANNE, who salutes her] — She is pretty! She is very pretty! With my little Suzanne, and Lucy in spite of her glasses, there'll be three pretty women in this house. Gracious, that will be none too many. [*Drinks soup. — To JEANNE.*] And how did such a charming girl as you come to marry that dreadful republican?

Paul [exclaiming] — Oh, Duchess? I a republican!

Duchess — Well, you have been one, anyhow.

Paul — Oh, well, like everybody else, when I was little. It's the political measles, Duchess: everybody has to have it.

Duchess [laughing] — Ha, ha! the measles! That's funny. [*To JEANNE.*] And you, are you a little gay too, my dear child, eh?

Jeanne [with reserve] — Mercy, your Grace, I am no enemy to proper enjoyment — and I —

Duchess — Yes indeed, there's a difference between a lark and you, I see that. So much the worse! so much the worse! I like to have folks gay, for my part — especially at your age. [*To the Chambermaid.*] Here, take this away. [*Pointing to her cup.*]

Mme. de Céran [to the Chambermaid] — Will you conduct Mme. Raymond to her room, mademoiselle? [*To JEANNE.*] Your apartment is beside mine.

Jeanne — Thank you, madame. [*To PAUL.*] Come, dear, this way.

Mme. de Céran — No, your husband I have put over there on the other side, with us workers; between the count, my son, and M. Bellac, in the pavilion that we call here — a little pretentiously, perhaps — the Pavilion of the Muses. [*To PAUL.*]

François will show you the way: I thought you would be better situated for work there.

Paul — Admirably, Countess, and I thank you. [*JEANNE pinches him.*] Aigh!

Jeanne [*softly*] — Go on, dear!

Paul [*low*] — At least you will come and help me unpack my trunks.

Jeanne — How?

Paul — By the corridors, above.

Duchess [*to MME. DE CÉRAN*] — If you imagine you are giving them any pleasure by your “separation of bodies” —

Jeanne [*low, to PAUL*] — I am too good-natured.

Mme. de Céran [*to JEANNE*] — Why, does this arrangement annoy you?

Jeanne — I, your Ladyship? Not the least in the world. Moreover, you know better than any one else *quid debeat, quid non*.

Mme. de Céran [*to PAUL*] — Altogether charming!

[*They go out, PAUL to the right, JEANNE to the left.*]

SCENE VII.

Duchess [*seated near the table on the left and working at her tapestry*] — Huh! she speaks Latin! Well, well! she won't disfigure the collection.

Mme. de Céran — You know, aunt, that Revel is at the point of death.

Duchess — He doesn't do anything but that; and besides, what has that to do with me?

Mme. de Céran [*seating herself*] — Why, aunt! Revel is a second Saint-Réault. He holds at least fifteen offices: that of director in the Junior School among others, a situation that leads to everything; that's what Roger must have. He has just come back to-day, and I have the secretary of the Ministry to dinner this evening, you know.

Duchess — Yes, a new stratum called Toulonnier.

Mme. de Céran — This evening I carry off the place.

Duchess — Then you are going to make a schoolmaster of your son, at present?

Mme. de Céran — But it's the first round of the ladder, aunt, don't you understand!

Duchess — To be sure, you've brought him up like a tutor.

Mme. de Céran — I have made a serious man of him, aunt.

Duchess — Oh yes, talk of that! A man of twenty-eight, who has not yet even — got into one scrape, I'll bet on it: if that isn't shameful!

Mme. de Céran — At thirty he will be in the Institute; at thirty-five in the Chamber.

Duchess — Well, well! actually, you are going to begin over again with the son what you did with the father?

Mme. de Céran — Did I do so badly by him, then?

Duchess — Oh, as for your husband, I've nothing to say: a dried-up heart, a mediocre intelligence —

Mme. de Céran — Aunt!

Duchess — Let me alone, will you: your husband was a fool!

Mme. de Céran — Duchess!

Duchess — A fool with Deportment! You shoved him into politics. He was a marked-out man. And yet all you could make of him was a minister of agriculture and commerce. That wasn't much to brag of! Well, let it pass for him: but for Roger, it's another thing, — he is intelligent, he must have a heart or else he'll have got — oh, good gracious! or else he won't be my nephew. You don't think of that, do you?

Mme. de Céran — I think of his career, aunt.

Duchess — And of his happiness?

Mme. de Céran — I have thought of that.

Duchess — Oh yes, indeed! Lucy, isn't it? They write to each other, I know: she's pretty — but pshaw! A girl with glasses and without any bust — do you call that thinking of his happiness?

Mme. de Céran — Duchess, you are dreadful.

Duchess — A sort of acrolite who fell here for a fortnight and has been here ten years, a pedant who corresponds with the great scholars and translates Schopenhauer.

Mme. de Céran — A serious, educated person, an orphan, extremely rich and well born, the niece of the Lord Chancellor, who recommended her to me — that will be a wife for Roger —

Duchess — That English bankeress! — brrr! Just by kissing her he'll get his nose frozen. Besides, you're on the wrong track, you know. In the first place, Bellac is in love with her: yes, the professor. Oh, he has wanted too many lessons of me. — And then, she is in love with him.

Mme. de Céran — Lucy?

Duchess — Yes, Lucy! exactly! Just like all the rest of you, too: you're all crazy over him! — Oh, I know that.

business better than you do, maybe. — No, no, it isn't Lucy that is to be your son's.

Mme. de Céran — Yes, it is Suzanne : I know your designs.

Duchess — And I don't hide them ! Yes, if I brought Suzanne to your house, it was so he'd marry her ; if I wanted him to be her tutor, and after a fashion her master, it was so he'd marry her : and he will marry her, I count on it.

Mme. de Céran — You count without me, Duchess, for I will never consent to it !

Duchess — And why not ? A child —

Mme. de Céran — Disquieting in origin, disquieting in behavior, without education, without breeding !

Duchess [*bursting into a laugh*] — Just me, at her age !

Mme. de Céran — Without fortune, without birth !

Duchess — Without birth ! The daughter of my poor Georges, so beautiful, so kind, so brave—your cousin, after all.

Mme. de Céran — A natural child !

Duchess — Natural ! Well, what of it ? Natural ! As if all children weren't natural !—You make me laugh ! And then, besides, he acknowledged her. And then—and then—you'll come out nowhere, you know, if the devil mixes in it—and so I have to !

Mme. de Céran — He has mixed himself in it, Duchess, but not as you hope : it is you who are on the wrong track.

Duchess — Oh, the professor ! yes, yes, Bellac. You told me that. Then you think nobody can go to his lectures without falling in love with him ?

Mme. de Céran — But Suzanne has never missed one, aunt, and she takes notes, and she writes them out, and she *works* : Suzanne doing serious work ! And when he is there, she never leaves him for an instant—she drinks in his words. And all that for instruction, forsooth ? Oh, pshaw ! it isn't the instruction she loves, it's the instructor ! that's just as clear ! Besides, one has only to see her with Lucy : she's jealous of her. And that coquetry that has come to her, and her character for some time since ? She sings, she sulks, she blushes, she turns pale, she laughs, she cries —

Duchess — April showers : it's the flower beginning to blow. She is bored, is that child.

Mme. de Céran — Here ?

Duchess — Here ! Oh my, do you imagine people get any fun here ? I myself, mind you, I ! do you suppose if I were

eighteen I'd be here, with all your old women and all your old men? Oh, yes, perhaps! — Why, I'd be always squeezed in with the young people, I would! and the youngest possible, and the handsomest possible! We women, mind — there's only one thing that never bores us, and that is to love and be loved! And the older I grow, the more I see there's no other happiness in the world.

Mme. de Céran — There are more serious things, aunt.

Duchess — More serious than love? Oh, come! In other words, when you lose hold of that, you make out with others; when we get old we have false enjoyments as we have false teeth, but there's only one true sort! just one! it's love, I tell you!

Mme. de Céran — You are romantic, aunt.

Duchess — That's on account of my age, niece. Women are that twice: at sixteen for themselves, at sixty for others. — To sum up, you want Lucy to marry your son; I want it should be Suzanne: you say it is Suzanne that loves Bellac, I tell you it is Lucy. Perhaps both of us are wrong. It's Roger that must judge.

Mme. de Céran — What?

Duchess — Yes: I shall set forth the whole situation to him not later than immediately after he gets here.

Mme. de Céran — You will?

Duchess — Oh, he's her tutor! He's got to know about it. [*Aside.*] And besides, it will stir him up a little, and he needs it!

SCENE VIII.

Enter LUCY, in full low-necked toilette and a tippet.

Lucy — I think your son is here, madame.

Mme. de Céran — The Count!

Duchess — Roger!

Lucy — His carriage is entering the court.

Mme. de Céran — At last!

Duchess — Were you afraid he wouldn't come back?

Mme. de Céran — That he wouldn't come back in time, yes — on account of that position.

Lucy — Oh! He wrote me this morning that he would arrive to-day, Thursday.

Duchess — And you cut the Professor's lecture to see him sooner? Well, that's good.

Lucy — Oh, it isn't for that, madame.

Duchess [*low, to MME. DE CÉRAN*] — You see? [*Aloud.*] No?

Lucy — No — I was hunting — I — it was something else that kept me away.

Duchess — But it isn't for the aforesaid Schopenhauer that you've got up that toilette, I imagine?

Lucy — But aren't we to receive here this evening, madame?

Duchess [*low to MME. DE CÉRAN*] — Bellac, it's clear enough. [*To LUCY.*] My compliments, moreover. There's only those frightful glasses — why do you wear such infamies?

Lucy — Because I can't see without them, madame.

Duchess — A nice reason! [*Aside.*] She is practical. I have a horror of that! All the same, she isn't as thin as I imagined. These English are agreeable surprises.

Mme. de Cérán — Ah! here's my son.

SCENE IX.

Enter ROGER.

Roger — Mother! oh, mother! how happy I am to see you again.

Mme. de Cérán — And I the same, my dear child. [*Gives him her hand to kiss.*]

Roger — How long it has been! Once more! [*Kisses her hand again.*]

Duchess [*aside*] — They don't choke each other.

Mme. de Cérán [*calling his attention to MME. DE RÉVILLE*] — The Duchess, my friend.

Roger [*going to the DUCHESS*] — Duchess!

Duchess — Call me aunt, and kiss me!

Roger — My dear aunt — [*Starts to kiss her hand.*]

Duchess — No! no! On the cheeks for me, on the cheeks: those are the little perquisites of my age. Now look straight at me! You've still got your little tutorial air! Well, you've let your mustaches grow: he's every bit a darling like that, the boy is.

Mme. de Cérán — I hope, Roger, you will cut those off.

Roger — Yes, mother, don't worry. Ah, Lucy; good morning, Lucy!

Lucy — Good morning, Roger! [*They shake hands.*] Did you have a pleasant journey?

Roger — Oh ! the most interesting kind : fancy a country almost unexplored, and as I wrote you, a veritable mine for the scientist, the poet, and the artist.

Duchess — And the women ? Tell me a little about the women.

Mme. de Céran — Duchess !

Roger [*in astonishment*] — What women, aunt ?

Duchess — The women of the East, who are so beautiful, it seems — ah, you rascal !

Roger — I assure you, aunt, I lacked the time to verify that — detail.

Duchess [*indignantly*] — Detail !

Roger [*smiling*] — Besides, the government did not send me out for that.

Duchess — Well, what did you see, then ?

Roger — You will read it all in the *Revue Archéologique*.

Lucy — On the funeral monuments of western Asia, isn't it, Roger ?

Roger — Yes. Oh, Lucy ! there are *tumuli* there —

Duchess — Come, come, you can be sentimental when you are by yourselves. Talk to me a little : you must be tired. Have you just arrived ?

Roger — Oh, no, aunt ! I have been in Paris since last evening.

Duchess — Did you go to the theater ?

Roger — No, I simply went to see the Minister.

Mme. de Céran — That's right ! and what did he say to you ?

Lucy — I will leave you.

Mme. de Céran — Oh, you can stay, Lucy.

Lucy — No, it is better manners to leave you : I will be back shortly ; — good-bye, Roger. [*Gives him her hand.*]

Roger [*pressing her hand*] — Good-bye, Lucy.

Duchess [*aside*] — As for those two, I'll warrant them calm — one couldn't be calmer.

[*LUCY goes out, ROGER accompanies her as far as door on right,*

MME. DE CÉRAN seats herself in easy-chair beside table.

SCENE X.

Mme. de Céran — Well, what did the Minister say to you ?

Duchess — Ah, yes, that's right, let's talk a little about what's happened this long while.

Roger — He questioned me on the results of my voyage, and

requested my report with the briefest delay, assigning for the day of its deposit a recompense which you divine, do you not? [*Shows his button-hole, in which is the ribbon of the Chevalier of the Legion of Honor.*]

Mme. de Céran — Officer? That is well, but I have better. And what next?

* *Roger* — And next, he charged me to present his respects to you, mother, begging you to keep him in mind for that bill in the Senate.

Mme. de Céran — I will keep him in mind if he will keep us in mind. You must begin on your report without delay.

Roger — At once.

Mme. de Céran — You sent cards to the President's house?

Roger — Yes, this morning; and to those of General de Briaux and Madame de Vielfond.

Mme. de Céran — Good! People must know of your return. And I will have a note sent to the papers too. On that point, one observation: The articles you have sent from abroad are very well; only I have discovered with surprise a tendency to — what shall I say? — to imagination, to style; there are descriptions of nature — digressions — there are even *verses* — [*in a tone of sorrowful reproach*] verses of Alfred de Musset, my child!

Duchess — Yes indeed, it was almost amusing, on my word.

Mme. de Céran — The Duchess is jesting, my dear; but guard yourself against poetry, I beg. You are treating of serious matters: *be serious*.

Roger — I didn't suppose, mother — but how does one recognize that an article is serious?

Duchess [*showing a pamphlet*] — By its not being cut, my dear.

Mme. de Céran — Your aunt exaggerates, my child; but come, believe me, no poetry. And now, we dine at six. You have your report on the *tumuli* to do, and an hour before you. I will not detain you: off to your work, go!

Duchess — One instant! Now that your outpourings of the heart are through with, let's talk business, if you please. And Suzanne?

Roger — Oh, that dear little girl, where is she?

Duchess — At the course of comparative literatures, my dear.

Roger — Suzanne?

Duchess — Yes, at Bellac's course.

Roger — Bellac? — Mm. — Bellac?

Duchess — A this-winter's mushroom, the fashionable savant, one of those Normal School dandy abbés, who court women and are courted by them, and push themselves by that means. The Princess Okolitch, who is mad about him, — like all us old women, for that matter, — struck the notion of having him give twice a week, in her drawing-room, a course of which literature is the pretext and tittle-tattle the object. Now, by dint of seeing all the upper-ten petticoats smitten with the genius of this young, amiable, fertile Vadius, it seems your pupil has done like the others, that's all !

Mme. de Céran — This is useless, Duchess —

Duchess — Pardon me, he is her tutor, and he ought to know everything.

Roger — But what does all this mean, aunt ?

Duchess — It means that Suzanne is in love with this gentleman ! There ! do you understand ?

Roger — Suzanne ! — oh, pshaw : that half-grown girl !

Duchess — Oh, it doesn't take long for a half-grown girl to turn into a full-grown woman, you must know.

Roger — Suzanne !

Duchess — Well, anyway, that's what your mother maintains.

Mme. de Céran — I maintain — I maintain that that — young lady is obviously seeking for the good graces of a man much too serious to marry her, but enough of a lady's man to amuse himself with her ; and I maintain that in my house, this affair, which as yet is nothing more than an impropriety, shall not grow into a scandal.

Duchess [to ROGER] — You understand ?

Roger — But, mother, you astound me ! Suzanne ! a child that I left in short dresses, climbing trees ; a little girl I set tasks for, who jumped into my lap, who called me "papa" — pshaw, it's impossible ! — such precocious depravity —

Duchess — Depravity, because she's in love ! Oh, you are your mother's son with a vengeance ! — And as to being precocious, at her age it was many a day since my heart had spoken. He was a hussar, was mine ! Yes, blue and gold ! superb ! He was as stupid as his sword ! but at that age — ! A new heart is like a new house — the ones that dry the plastering are not the true tenants ! — Well, it seems that Bellac — oh, it doesn't seem likely, but girls — must be watched. [Aside.] I don't believe a word of it, but it will stir him up. [Aloud.] And that's why you will please me by burying those *tumuli* of yours, and occupying yourself with her and nothing but her.

SCENE XI.

Suzanne [*entering stealthily behind and putting her hand over his eyes*] — Peekaboo !

Roger [*rising*] — Eh ?

Suzanne [*coming around and standing before him*] — Ah ! there she is.

Roger [*in surprise*] — But, mademoiselle —

Suzanne — Wretch ! not to recognize your daughter.

Roger — Suzanne !

Duchess [*aside*] — He's blushing.

Suzanne — Well ! aren't you going to kiss me ?

Mme. de Céran — Come, Suzanne, this is not becoming —

Suzanne — To kiss my father ? — Well ! [*Goes to him.*]

Duchess [*to ROGER*] — Oh, kiss her, why don't you ! [*They kiss.*]

Suzanne — I'm so glad ! — Just imagine, I didn't know you were coming to-day ! It was Mme. de Saint-Réault that told me at the lecture, just now ; then without saying a word — I was right close to a door — I skipped out and ran for the railroad station !

Mme. de Céran — Alone ?

Suzanne — Yes, all alone ! Oh, it was so amusing ! — But the funniest thing, you'll see ! I got to the ticket window — no money, oh dear ! When he noticed it, a gentleman that was getting his ticket offered to get mine — a very polite young man. He was just going to Saint-Germain. And then another, a most respectable old gentleman ! And then a third, and then everybody, all the gentlemen that were there — they were all going to Saint-Germain. “ But, mademoiselle, I beg you ! ” — “ I could not suffer — ” “ Me, mademoiselle, me ! ” I gave the preference to the respectable old gentleman : you understand, it was more discreet.

Mme. de Céran — You accepted it ?

Suzanne — Why, I couldn't stay there, you know.

Mme. de Céran — From a stranger ?

Suzanne — What, when he was a respectable old gentleman ? Oh, he was ever so nice : he helped me get into the car — oh, ever so nice ! they all were, for that matter ; for they all got in with us. And so kind ! They offered me the corners, they raised the windows, and then they were so pressing — “ Here, mademoiselle ! ” “ No, you will be riding backwards ! ”

“Excuse me, sit there: not in the sun, mademoiselle!” — and they made bows, just as they would to a lady. — Oh yes, it’s amusing to travel alone! — It was only the respectable old gentleman, who kept talking to me about his immense property — I didn’t like that a bit.

Mme. de Céran — Why, this is monstrous!

Suzanne — Oh no; but the most surprising thing is that when we got here, I found my pocket-book again! in my pocket! Then I paid back the respectable old gentleman, I made a handsome curtsy to the other gentlemen, and came out. Oh dear, they all looked at me so — [*To ROGER*] — like you, just! — What ails him? — Come then, kiss me again!

Mme. de Céran [*to the DUCHESS*] — This is an indecorum that surpasses all the others.

Suzanne — An indecorum!

Duchess — You see well enough she has no consciousness —

Mme. de Céran — A young girl alone on the railroad!

Suzanne — Lucy goes out all alone.

Mme. de Céran — Lucy is not eighteen.

Suzanne — I should think not! She’s twenty-four if she’s a day!

Mme. de Céran — Lucy knows how to conduct herself.

Suzanne — Why? because she wears glasses?

Duchess [*laughing*] — Good, Suzanne! [*Aside.*] I do adore that child!

Mme. de Céran — Lucy wasn’t sent home from the convent.

Suzanne — Oh, that — that was an injustice, you’ll see in a minute. When I got too sick of —

Mme. de Céran — It is needless: your tutor knows it all.

Suzanne — Yes, but he doesn’t know why. You’ll see if it wasn’t an injustice. When I got too sick of the class, I got myself sent outdoors — to take a walk in the garden, you know. Oh my! it was just as easy — I knew how. In the midst of a total silence, I’d exclaim, “Ah, what a genius Voltaire was!” Sister Seraphine would say to me right away, “Leave the room, miss!” It didn’t take long, and it always worked. One day when the sun was just lovely, I looked out of the window, and all at once I said, “Ah, what a genius Voltaire was!” and I waited. Not a word! I said again, “Oh, Voltaire was such —” Still nothing — dead silence! I was so astonished that I turned round. The mother superior was there; I hadn’t heard her come in. Tableau! She didn’t send me into the garden; not

much! She sent me back here! Ah, well, worse luck! — I've had enough convent like that — now I'm a woman! So there!

Mme. de Céran — Your conduct scarcely proves it. *Mme. de Saint-Réault* must be dying of uneasiness.

Suzanne — Oh, the lecture was nearly done; she'll be here in a minute with the others and M. Bellac. Oh, didn't he speak to-day! Oh!

Duchess [looking at ROGER] — Hm!

Suzanne — And how the ladies did applaud him! And in such toilettes! It looked like a marriage at Saint-Clotilde. Oh, but he was [sounding a kiss on her fingers] superb!

Duchess [looking at ROGER] — Hm!

Suzanne — Superb! And you ought to have heard the ladies — “Ah, charming! charming!” *Mme. de Loudan* set up little guinea-pig squeals over it. Aigh! aigh! aigh! I don't like that woman at all!

Duchess [looking at ROGER] — Hm! [To SUZANNE.] Then those are the notes you take of the lectures, are they?

Suzanne — Oh, I take others. [To ROGER.] You'll see.

Duchess [to ROGER, taking the packet of notes which SUZANNE has laid on the table on entering] — We can see immediately. [Five o'clock strikes.] Five o'clock! Oh! oh! and my walk! [Low, to ROGER.] Well, do you see anything there — for Bellac?

Roger — No, I —

Duchess — Search! . Examine! Decipher! She's a palimpsest well worth any other. After all, it's your profession.

Roger — I don't understand it at all.

Duchess — And it's your duty!

Mme. de Céran [aside] — What an amount of lost time!

Duchess [aside, looking at ROGER] — It's stirring him up!

Suzanne [aside, looking at all of them] — What's the matter with them?

[DUCHESS and MME. DE CÉRAN go out.]

SCENE XII.

Suzanne — How you look at me! Because I came alone? Are you angry?

Roger — No, Suzanne: but still you ought to comprehend —

Suzanne — But you don't call me *thou*: isn't that because you are angry?

Roger — No, but still —

Suzanne — Then it's because you find I'm a woman now — huh? — yes, isn't it? Tell me, oh, do tell me! — it would please me so much.

Roger — Yes, Suzanne, you are a woman now; and that is exactly why you must observe things more closely.

Suzanne [*squeezing against him*] — That's it, scold me: I like to have you.

Roger [*gently repulsing her*] — 'There, stay so!

Suzanne — Now just wait, you don't call me *thou*: don't you want me to call *you* so either?

Roger — It would be better not to.

Suzanne — Oh, how amusing! but it isn't easy.

Roger — There are many other proprieties to which you must bind yourself down henceforth, and that is precisely where the reproach —

Suzanne — Yes, yes! oh, I know: no deportment! M. Bellac has told me enough about that.

Roger — Ah! M. —

Suzanne — But what is it you want! no means — it isn't my fault, so there; I tell you truly, truly. You see, it isn't easy; but I did honestly make a resolution that on thy — on your return, thou — you — oh dear! I can't do it! worse luck — that will have to go for another time: — yes, I made a resolution that on thy return thou shouldst find me as stiff as Lucy, and that how I had studied! There's six months I study hard — and then, all at once I find you've got here, and, rattlety-bang! six months lost, and my stage début is a fizzle after all!

Roger [*reproachfully*] — "My stage début is a fizzle!"

Suzanne — Ah yes, I'm glad you've got back! — I love you so much! Oh, so much! I adore you!

Roger — Suzanne! Suzanne! Drop this habit of yours of using words you do not realize the full import of.

Suzanne — What! I don't realize —! But I realize perfectly well! I adore you, I say. Don't you love me? such a funny expression as you have! Why do you have such a funny expression? Don't you love me better than Lucy?

Roger — Suzanne!

Suzanne — That's just it! You're going to marry her, aren't you?

Roger — Suzanne —

Suzanne — They told me so.

Roger — Come, come! —

Suzanne — Then why did you write to her? — Yes, you wrote her twenty-seven letters — to her! Oh, I've kept count of them — twenty-seven.

Roger — They were about matters —

Suzanne. — And another this morning — still about matters, I suppose? What did you write to her this morning, say.

Roger — Why, merely that I was to arrive Thursday.

Suzanne — That you were to arrive Thursday? only that? very likely! Then why didn't you write to me? I would have seen you first.

Roger — But haven't I written to you during my absence? and often.

Suzanne — Oh, often! — ten times! and even those, little sentences about nothing at all, at the bottom of a page, as you would to a baby. I am not a baby any more, there! I have thought a great deal in these six months; I have learned things!

Roger — What? what things? [*SUZANNE leans on his shoulder and cries.*] Suzanne, what's the matter with you?

Suzanne [*wiping her eyes and trying to laugh*] — Oh, and I have worked so! oh, a lot! You know, my piano — that horrible piano. — Well, I play Schumann, now: that's pretty stiff, isn't it?

Roger — Oh! —

Suzanne — Don't you want I should play it?

Roger — No — later.

Suzanne — You are good and right! And I have grown very learned, too.

Roger — Yes, you follow M. Bellac's courses: it is Bellac that has replaced me, then?

Suzanne — Yes. Oh, he has been so kind! Oh, I love him a lot, too..

Roger — Huh!

Suzanne [*eagerly*] — Are you jealous of him?

Roger — I —

Suzanne — Oh, tell me so — I understand that! I am so jealous myself! — *oh!* — but why should you be? You and anybody else isn't the same thing. You are not my father, are you?

Roger — Excuse me: your father —

Suzanne — Then what are you? Come, pet me a little, as you used to.

Roger — Not as I used to.

Suzanne — Yes ! yes ! as you used to. [*Goes to kiss him.*]

Roger — Suzanne ! oh no, not that any more.

Suzanne — Why ?

Roger — Come, keep off. Tek ! tek ! tek ! [*Seats himself on the sofa.*]

Suzanne — I love to have you go “Tek ! tek ! tek !”

Roger [*as before*] — Be reasonable.

Suzanne — Oh, there's been reason enough for to-day !

[*Rumples his hair, laughing.*]

Roger — Keep away with you ! — A big girl !

Suzanne [*jealously*] — Oh ! if it was Lucy —

Roger — There, behave thyself !

Suzanne — You called me *thou* ! a forfeit ! [*Sits down in his lap and kisses him.*]

Roger — Suzanne, once more —

Suzanne — Yes, once more. [*Kisses him.*]

Roger [*repulsing her and rising*] — This is unbearable !

Suzanne — I am a plague, ain't I ? Pshaw ! I'm going to look over my bunch of notes, that will make us friends again. [*Stops at the door and looks.*] Ah, there are the ladies and M. Bellac ! What — Lucy is in low neck ! Wait a minute. [*Hurries out.*]

Roger [*alone, much agitated*] — Unbearable !

SCENE XIII.

Enter DUCHESS.

Duchess — Well ?

Roger — Well ?

Duchess — How agitated you are !

Roger — Well ! — She has been very affectionate — perhaps too much so !

Duchess — I promise to commiserate you. Then you haven't found anything ? But I've found this. [*Draws a card portrait from SUZANNE'S package of notes.*]

Roger. — The photograph — ?

Duchess — Of the professor — yes.

Roger — Among her notes !

Duchess [*airily*] — Yes, but that —

Roger — Ah ! pardon me, that —

The LADIES outside — An admirable lecture ! Magnificent !

Duchess — There he is, the beautiful object ! with his body-guards !

SCENE XIV.

Enter BELLAC, MME. ARRIÉGO, MME. DE LOUDAN, MME. DE SAINT-RÉAULT, MME. DE CÉLAN, LUCY.

Mme. de Saint-Réault — Superb — it was superb !

Bellac — Mme. de Saint-Réault, spare me !

Mme. de Loudan — Ideal ! do you hear ? ideal !

Bellac — Marquise !

Mme. Arriégo — Beautiful ! beautiful ! Oh ! I feel impassioned !

Bellac — Mme. Arriégo ! there !

Mme. de Loudan — In short, ladies, say the word : it was — dangerous ! but isn't that his besetting habit ?

Bellac — Oh, pray, Mme. de Loudan.

Mme. de Loudan — Oh ! to begin with, I am mad over your talent — yes, yes, mad ! and so are all of you ! Oh, I don't hide it ! I tell it everywhere ! cynically ! — You are one of the gods of my Olympus ! — it is fetishism !

Mme. Arriégo — You know I have one of his autographs in my locket. [*Points to her neck.*] There.

Mme. de Loudan [*pointing to her bosom*] — And I one of his pens, there !

Duchess [*to* ROGER] — Old cats !

Mme. de Loudan [*to* MME. DE CÉLAN] — Ah, Countess, why were you not at this lecture ?

Mme. de Céran [*presenting* ROGER] — Here is my excuse ! My son, ladies.

Ladies — Ah, Count !

Mme. de Loudan — So that is the returned exile !

Roger [*bowing*] — Ladies !

Mme. de Céran [*presenting* BELLAC *to her son*] — M. Bellac, — Count Roger de Céran.

Mme. de Loudan — I knew the obstacle was insurmountable — but you, Lucy, you —

Lucy — I ? I had business here.

Mme. de Loudan — You absent, his Muse failed him.

Bellac [*gallantly*] — Ah, Marquise, I could answer you : you are another of them.

Mme. de Loudan — He is charming. [*To Lucy.*] Ah, you don't know what you lost.

Lucy — Oh, I know —

Mme. Arriégo — No, she does not know ! A flame ! A passion !

Mme. de Loudan — A sweetness of language ! A delicacy of thought !

Bellac — Before such an auditory, who would not be eloquent ?

Duchess — And what did he talk about to-day ?

All — Love !

Duchess [*to ROGER*] — Of course !

Mme. Arriégo — And like a poet !

Mme. de Loudan — And like a savant ! a psychologist coupled with a dreamer ! a lyre and a scalpel ! — It was — ah ! there was only one thing I cannot accept, and that is that love has its source in instinct.

Bellac — But, Marquise, I said —

Mme. de Loudan — Ah ! not that — no, no !

Bellac — I spoke of love in nature.

Mme. de Loudan — Instinct — pah ! Ladies, help me, defend me ! Lucy !

Bellac — You choose ill, Marquise, — Miss Watson holds by instinct.

Mme. de Saint-Réault — Is it possible, Lucy !

Mme. de Loudan — Instinct !

Mme. Arriégo — In love !

Mme. de Loudan — But that is to rob the soul of its most beautiful blossom : why, then there is no longer either good or evil, Lucy —

Lucy [*coldly*] — The problem here is neither of good nor evil, madame, but of the very existence of the species.

Ladies [*protesting*] — Oh-h-h !

Duchess [*aside*] — Decidedly she is practical !

Mme. de Loudan [*with indignation*] — Stop, you dehaloize Love !

Lucy — Hunter and Darwin —

Mme. de Loudan — No ! no ! no one knows better than I the fatalities of the body ! Matter dominates us, oppresses us, I know it ! I feel it ! but leave us at least the psychical refuge of pure ecstasies !

Bellac — But, Marquise —

Mme. de Loudan — Be silent ! you are a groveler ! I will not strike my God — that would be a sacrilege, — but I refuse to follow suit.

Duchess [*aside*] — Little old flyaway !

Bellac — We shall be reconciled, I hope, when you read my book.

Mme. de Loudan — But when ? oh, when ? Ah, that book, the whole world is waiting for it ! and he won't tell us anything about it, not even the title !

All — The title, at least the title !

Mme. Arriégo — Lucy ! you ! you insist on it !

Lucy — Well — the title ?

Bellac [*to LUCY, after a time*] — “*Mélanges* !”

Mme. de Loudan — Oh, how nice that is ! — but when ? oh, when ?

Bellac — I am hastening the publication, feeling assured that it will give me one more claim to the position I solicit.

Mme. de Céran — You solicit ?

Mme. Arriégo — What more can he desire ?

Mme. de Loudan — He, the nursling of the fairies !

Bellac — Well, poor Revel is at the point of death, you know. And in any case, I confess without shame, I have put in my candidacy for the headship of the Junior School.

Duchess [*to MME. CÉRAN*] — No. 3.

Bellac — Ladies, if it so happen that it does not please God, I commend myself to your omnipotence.

Ladies — Be calm, *Bellac*.

Bellac [*turning toward the DUCHESS*] — And you, *Duchess*, may I hope —

Duchess — Oh ! I ? My dear sir, you mustn't ask anything of me before dinner : the fatality of the body dominates me, as *Mme. de Loudan* says. [*A clock strikes.*] There, that's the first stroke, — you haven't over a quarter of an hour. Go and dress : we'll talk about this at the table.

Mme. de Céran — At the table ! but *M. Toulonnier* has not arrived, *Duchess* !

Duchess — Oh, goodness, it's all the same to me : at six precisely, with or without him —

Mme. de Céran — Without him ! a Secretary-General !

Duchess — Huh ! under the Republic !

[*SUZANNE enters with her note packet under her arm, and puts it on the table at the right.*]

Mme. de Cérán — I am going to meet him. [*To BELLAC.*] My dear professor, you will be shown to your room. [*Rings; FRANÇOIS enters.*]

Bellac — It is unnecessary, Countess, I have the happiness to know the way. [*Low, to LUCY.*] You received my letter?

Lucy — Yes, but — [*BELLAC makes her a sign to be silent, bows, and goes to the door of the apartment on the right.*]

Mme. de Loudan — And us, ladies, let us beautify ourselves for God!

Mme. Arriégo — Come!

Mme. de Cérán — Will you come with me, Lucy?

Lucy — With pleasure, madame.

Mme. de Loudan — In that toilette? Aren't you afraid of the treacherous beauty of spring evenings, my dear?

Lucy — Oh, I'm not cold.

Mme. de Loudan — You are a daughter of the fogs, that is true. As for me, I am in terror of these blue dampnesses.

[*Goes out with MME. ARRIÉGO by the door of the apartment on the left.*]

[*At the moment LUCY starts to follow MME. DE CÉRAN into the garden she is held back by FRANÇOIS.*]

François [*to LUCY*] — I haven't found that pink paper yet, miss.

Suzanne [*picking up a pink paper which she has just let fall on the table while moving the papers that litter it, to put her notes there: aside*] — A pink paper! [*Stands looking at it.*]

Lucy — Oh yes, that letter of this morning.

Suzanne [*aside, hiding it quickly behind her*] — That letter of this morning!

Lucy [*going*] — Oh well, don't hunt any more, there's no use. [*Goes out through the garden door. FRANÇOIS goes out behind her.*]

SCENE XV.

Suzanne [*aside, looking at LUCY and then at ROGER*] — That letter of this morning!

Duchess — What, you are not ready yet — nor you? But what have you just been doing here? [*SUZANNE looks at ROGER without answering.*]

Roger [*to the DUCHESS*] — Ah, those are the notes. Give them to me, Suzanne. [*Goes to her; SUZANNE holds out*

the package to him, still eying him without speaking.] What's the matter with her?

Duchess — Let me see those notes a minute!

[*Roger goes over to the DUCHESS seated on the left. SUZANNE, on the right near the table, tries to open the paper she holds in her left hand without being seen.*

Roger [looking at SUZANNE; aside, in surprise] — This is singular.

Duchess [to ROGER, drawing him toward her] — Here, come nearer! Oh dear me, my eyes!

Roger [lets the notes droop while furtively regarding SUZANNE, and all at once grasps the DUCHESS' arm — low] — Aunt!

Duchess [low, to ROGER] — What's the matter with you?

Roger — Look! Don't raise your head. She's trying to read something! A letter! Do you see? She's hiding it: do you see?

Duchess — Yes!

Suzanne [who has opened the paper, reads] — "I shall arrive Thursday." [In astonishment.] From Roger! His letter of this morning to LUCY! [Looks at the paper.] But why is it written like that, every which way and not signed? [Reads.] "This evening, at ten, in the conservatory. Have a sick headache." Oh!

Duchess — Why, what can it be? [Calling.] Suzanne!

Suzanne [surprised, puts the hand that holds the letter behind her back, and turning toward the DUCHESS, says] — Aunt?

Duchess — What are you reading there?

Suzanne — I, aunt? Nothing.

Duchess — Seems to me — Come here.

Suzanne [slipping the letter under the books on the table she is leaning against, with the left hand she holds behind her back] — Yes, aunt. [Walks toward the DUCHESS.]

Duchess [aside] — Huh! there's something queer in this, that's certain.

Suzanne [near the DUCHESS] — What do you want, aunt?

Duchess — Go and find me a cloak.

Suzanne [hesitatingly] — But —

Duchess — You don't want to?

Suzanne — Yes — yes, aunt.

Duchess — There in my chamber. Go on! [SUZANNE goes. DUCHESS, to ROGER.] On the table, quick!

Roger — What?

Duchess — The letter! She hid it! I saw her!

Roger — Hid it! [*Goes to the table and hunts.*]

Duchess — Yes, in the corner there, under the black book! Don't you see anything?

Roger — No — Ah, yes! A pink paper! [*Takes the letter and carries it, reading, to the DUCHESS.*] Oh!

Duchess — What is it?

Roger [*reading*] — "I shall arrive Thursday." *From Bellac!*

Duchess [*snatching the letter from him and inspecting it*] — *From!* But it isn't signed! And such writing!

Roger — Topsy-turvy, yes. Oh, the gentleman is prudent! But "I shall arrive Thursday" is he or I!

Duchess [*reading*] — "This evening at ten, in the conservatory. Have a sick headache!" An appointment! [*Holding out the letter to him.*] Quick! quick! put it back! I understand it.

Roger [*with a troubled air*] — Yes — [*Puts the letter back where he took it from.*]

Duchess — And now come back here!

Roger [*still troubled*] — Yes, yes!

Duchess — Quick, I say! quick! [*ROGER resumes his place beside his aunt.*] Quiet, now! there she is! [*SUZANNE reënters. DUCHESS, aloud, turning over the notes*] — Well, really, this is very good indeed, very good!

Suzanne — Here's your cloak, aunt.

Duchess — Thank you, dear. [*Low, to ROGER.*] You talk. [*SUZANNE goes to the table, takes up the letter again, and keeps casting her eyes on it while turning around as before, as ROGER talks.*]

Roger [*in a troubled way*] — There is really, here — ah — astonishing progress — and — ah — I am astonished — [*Low, to the DUCHESS, indicating SUZANNE.*] Aunt!

Duchess [*low*] — Yes, she picked it up again; I saw her. [*Clock strikes. DUCHESS, aloud.*] Second bell! Now go and dress, Suzanne, you'll never be ready!

Suzanne [*aside, eying ROGER*] — An appointment with Lucy! Oh! [*Goes over to ROGER without speaking to him, and, still eying him, takes her notes from his hand, tears them up, throws them angrily on the floor, and goes out.*]

SCENE XVI.

Roger [in a dazed way, turning toward the DUCHESS] — Aunt?

Duchess — An appointment!

Roger — From Bellac!

Duchess — Rubbish!

Roger [dropping into a chair] — I've neither arms nor legs any more! [Voices heard outside; door at the rear opens.]

Duchess [looking out] — And there's the Toulonnier! and everybody! and dinner! There, go and put on your evening dress, that will quiet you down: you are pale —

Roger — Suzanne — it isn't possible, really!

Duchess — Huh? No, it isn't possible; — and yet —!

SCENE XVII.

Enter MME. DE CÉRAN, TOULONNIER, M. and MME. DE SAINT-REAUULT.

Mme. de Céran [presenting TOULONNIER to the DUCHESS] — The Secretary-General, aunt.

Toulonnier [bowing] — Your Grace!

Duchess — 'Pon my word, my dear M. Toulonnier, I was going to dine without you.

Toulonnier — You must pardon me, Duchess, but business —! We are literally overwhelmed. You will kindly permit me to retire early, will you not?

Duchess — Why, certainly, with pleasure.

Mme. de Céran [embarrassed] — Hm! Ah! [As BELLAC enters, surrounded by LUCY, MME. DE LOUDAN, and MME. ARRIÉGO.] M. Bellac!

Toulonnier [to whom MME. DE CÉRAN presents BELLAC] — Pleased to meet you! [BELLAC and he shake hands and talk.]

Mme. de Céran [returning to the DUCHESS] — Make much of him, aunt, please.

Duchess — Your Republican? Get out! A man who gives us twenty minutes, like the King! Fancy that!

Mme. de Céran — At least you will accept his arm to the table?

Duchess — Not a bit of it! Keep him for yourself! I'll take little Raymond for my share: he's livelier.

Roger [*coming out dressed, says with a frightened air to the* DUCHESS] — Aunt !

Duchess — What is it now ? What —

Roger — Oh, something — ! I just heard in the corridor !
Upstairs — oh, it isn't to be believed !

Duchess — Well, what ?

Roger — I didn't see anybody, but I positively heard — !

RAYMOND and JEANNE enter stealthily.

Duchess — But what ? what ?

Roger — Well, the sound of a kiss, up there !

Duchess [*jumping up*] — Of a —

Roger — Oh, but I heard it !

Duchess — But who —

Mme. de Céran [*presenting RAYMOND to TOULONNIER*] —
M. Paul Raymond, sub-prefect of Agenis. [*They bow.*]

Raymond — M. Secretary-General [*presenting JEANNE*],
Mme. Paul Raymond.

Enter SUZANNE in low neck.

Mme. de Loudun [*seeing SUZANNE*] — Oh ! oh !

Bellac — Ah, there's my young pupil.

[*Low murmurs of astonishment.*]

Roger [*to the DUCHESS*] — Aunt, see, low-necked ! oh, this is appalling.

Duchess — I don't find it — [*Aside.*] She has been crying.

François [*announces*] — The Duchess is served.

Roger [*going over to SUZANNE, who is talking with BELLAC*]
— Oh, I wish to know — [*Offering her his arm.*] Suzanne !
[*SUZANNE eyes him haughtily, and takes the arm of BELLAC, who is talking to LUCY.*]

Bellac [*to SUZANNE*] — That gentleman will make me very
envious, mademoiselle.

Roger [*to himself*] — Oh, this is too much !

[*Offers his arm to LUCY.*]

Duchess [*aside*] — What does all this mean ? [*Aloud.*]
Here, Raymond, your arm. [*RAYMOND comes up to her.*] Ah,
dear me — one must suffer to be a prefect, my friend.

Paul — The penance is sweet, Duchess.

Duchess — You will sit beside me at table, and we'll talk
about government corruption.

Paul — Oh, Duchess ! I, an official, to talk of that ! Oh
no — but I can listen to it !

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Present: SAINT-RÉAULT, BELLAC, TOULONNIER, ROGER, PAUL, JEANNE, MME. DE CÉLAN, MME. ARRIÉGO, MME. DE LOUDAN, DUCHESS, SUZANNE, LUCY. *All seated in a row to listen to SAINT-RÉAULT, who is finishing his reading.*

Saint-Réault — And let no one mistake! Profound in their strangeness as these legends may appear, they are only — as wrote in 1834 my illustrious father — they are only poor fancies compared with the superhuman conception of the Brahmans collected in the Upanishads, or even in the eighteen Paranas of Vyasa, the compiler of the Vedas.

Jeanne [*low, to PAUL*] — Are you asleep?

Paul — No, no — I hear something like an Auvergnat brogue [*i.e.* full of broad a's].

Saint-Réault [*continuing*] — Such, in plain terms, is the *concretum* of the Buddhic doctrine, and it is there that I will end. [*Applause. All rise.*]

Several Voices [*feebly*] — Excellent! excellent!

Saint-Réault — And now — [*Sudden silence. They sit down again.*] And now — [*Coughs.*]

Mme. de Céran [*eagerly*] — Are you tired, Saint-Réault?

Saint-Réault — Not at all, Countess.

Mme. Arriégo — Yes, you are tired: take a rest, and we will wait!

Numerous Voices — Yes, take a rest! take a rest!

Mme. de Loudan — You cannot always hover on the wing. Alight upon the earth once more, Baron.

Saint-Réault — Thank you, but — Besides, I have finished! [*All rise.*]

Several Voices [*amidst a general buzz*] — Most interesting! A little obscure! Extremely good! Too long!

Bellac [*to the Ladies*] — Materialistic! too materialistic!

Paul [*to JEANNE*] — It's a fluke!

Suzanne [*very loudly*] — M. Bellac!

Bellac — Mademoiselle?

Suzanne — Come over beside me. [*He goes to her.*]

Roger [*low*] — Aunt!

Duchess [*same tone*] — I should certainly say it looks as if she was doing it on purpose!

Saint-Réault [returning to the table] — Only one word more! [Astonishment. They seat themselves again in dismayed silence.] — or, to express myself better, one vote. — These studies, of which, despite the contracted limits and the slight form which the nature of my audience has imposed upon me —

Duchess [aside] — Well! he is polite!

Saint-Réault — — you will perhaps have glimpsed the immense range — these studies, I say, had in 1821, now nearly sixty years ago, for initiator, — I will go farther: for inventor, — the man of genius of whom I have the weighty honor to be the son —

Paul [to JEANNE] — He is playing corpse in this act.

Saint-Réault — In the path he traced, I have myself followed him, and not without luster, I venture to say. Another, it is true, after us, has attempted like us to snatch a few words of the eternal truth from the Sphinx until our advent unpenetrated by the primitive theogonies — I mean Revel, a considerable savant, a considerable man. My illustrious father is dead, Revel will soon have followed him to the tomb — if he has not already done so. I therefore remain alone on this new continent of the science of which Guillaume Eriel de Saint-Réault, my father, was the first occupant! Alone! May our rulers [looking at TOULONNIER]; may the depositaries and dispensers of power, on whom devolves the perilous charge of selecting a successor to the lamented brother whom we shall perhaps have to weep to-morrow; may these eminent men [looking at BELLAC, who is speaking to TOULONNIER], despite the solicitations more or less legitimate which beset them, make a choice enlightened, impartial — and determined solely by the triple authority of age, of aptitudes, and of acquired rights; — in a word, a choice worthy of my illustrious father, and of the great science which is his work, and which I am, I repeat, alone in representing to-day.

[All rise. Applause and great bustle. Buzz of voices in the drawing-room. Servants enter and circulate around, carrying plates; and meantime —]

Distinct Voices, in the hum — First-rate! bravo! bravo!

Paul — Ah, that's right to the point; good enough!

Mme. de Céran — It is a candidacy for the succession to Revel.

Bellac — For the Academy, for the Junior School, for everything!

Mme. de Céran [aside] — I suspected as much.

Servant [announcing] — General Count de Briais! —
M. Virot!

General [kissing MME. DE CÉRAN'S hand] — Countess!

Mme. de Céran — Ah, Senator —

Virot [kissing MME. DE CÉRAN'S hand] — Your Ladyship!

Mme. de Céran [to VIROT] — And you, my dear Deputy, too late! you arrive too late!

General [gallantly] — One always arrives too late in your drawing-room, Countess!

Mme. de Céran — M. de Saint-Réault had the floor: that tells the whole story!

General [to SAINT-RÉAULT, bowing] — Oh! ah! how sorry I am!

Virot [taking his arm and going to the left] — Then if the Chamber passes the bill, you will reject it?

General — Why, certainly — at least the first time, hang it! The Senate owes that to itself!

Virot — Ah, Duchess!

[They bow to her. PAUL RAYMOND and JEANNE slip out of the drawing-room into the garden.]

Mme. de Céran [to SAINT-RÉAULT] — Truly, you surpassed yourself to-day, Saint-Réault.

Mme. Arriégo — Yes, yes, surpassed! There can be no finer eulogy.

Mme. de Loudan — Ah, Baron! Baron! what a world you have opened to us, and how captivating are these first lisplings of the faith! Ah, your Buddhist Trinity! At the very outset, I am mad over it.

Lucy [to SAINT-RÉAULT] — Excuse my boldness, monsieur, but it seems to me that in your enumeration of the sacred books there is one lacuna.

Saint-Réault [piqued] — You think so, mademoiselle?

Lucy — I did not hear you quote either the Mahábhárata or the Ramáyana.

Saint-Réault — That is because they are not books of revelation, mademoiselle, but simple poems, which their antiquity renders an object of veneration to the Hindoos, it is true, but simple poems.

Lucy — Nevertheless, the Academy of Calcutta —

Saint-Réault [ironically] — Ah! that is the opinion of the Brahmins, at all events! — If you hold another about it —

Suzanne [very loud] — M. Bellac?

Bellac — Mademoiselle !

Suzanne — Please give me your arm : I want to take the air a moment.

Bellac — But — mademoiselle —

Suzanne — Don't you wish to ?

Bellac — But do you think that at this moment —

Suzanne — Come, please ! come !

[*Draws him away. They go out.*]

Roger [to the DUCHESS] — Aunt ! she is going out with him !

Duchess — Well, follow them. Wait, I'll go with you. I need a bit of a walk, anyhow : he has made me sleepy with his Brahma, that old bonze. [They go out.]

Toulonnier [to SAINT-RÉAULT] — Full of new views and erudition. [*Low.*] I perfectly understood that allusion at the end, my dear Baron ; but it was not needed. You know well enough we are all yours. [They press each other's hands.]

Mme. de Céran [to SAINT-RÉAULT] — Excuse me. [*Low, to TOULONNIER.*] You will not forget my son ?

Toulonnier — I do not forget my promise any more than yours, Countess.

Mme. de Céran — You will have your six votes in the Senate, that is agreed : but it is agreed also that after its published report —

Toulonnier — Countess, you know we are all yours.

Paul [to JEANNE, stealthily returning from the garden] — I tell you we were seen.

Jeanne — Too dark under the trees.

Paul — Even before dinner we were near being caught. Twice is too much ! I don't want any more of it.

Jeanne — Indeed ! Didn't you promise to kiss me in the corners — yes or no ?

Paul [with animation] — And you, do you want to be perfect — yes or no ?

Jeanne [with equal animation] — Yes, but I don't want to be a widow. [MME. DE CÉRAN approaches them.]

Paul [low, to JEANNE] — The Countess ! [*Aloud.*] Really, Jeanne, do you prefer the Bhagavata ?

Jeanne — Good gracious, my dear, the Bhagavata —

Mme. de Céran — What ? you understood something of all that science, madame ? Our poor Saint-Réault seemed to me this evening, however, particularly prolix and obscure.

Paul [*aside*] — What a coincidence !

Jeanne — Toward the end, nevertheless, Countess, he became clear enough.

Mme. de Céran — Oh yes, his candidacy : then you understood that ?

Jeanne — And then, the science that rejects faith, has not that itself a little need of faith ? — as M. de Maistre wrote.

Mme. de Céran — Extremely fine ! — I must present you to some one who will be very useful to you : General de Briaïs, the senator.

Jeanne — And to the deputy, your Ladyship ?

Mme. de Céran — Oh, the senator is the more powerful.

Jeanne — But isn't the deputy the more influential ?

Mme. de Céran — Really, my dear Raymond, you have been most fortunate. [*Pressing JEANNE'S hand.*] And so have I. [*To JEANNE.*] So be it ! to both of them, then !

Paul [*following JEANNE, who follows MME. DE CÉRAN: low*] — Angel ! angel !

Jeanne [*same*] — Shall we go into corners some more ?

Paul — Yes, darling ! but when there isn't anybody — Why ! during the tragedy.

Servant [*announcing*] — The Baroness de Boines, M. Melchior de Boines.

Baroness [*to MME. DE CÉRAN, who goes to receive her*] — Ah, my dear, have I arrived in time ?

Mme. de Céran — If it is for science, it is too late ; if it is for poetry, it is too early. I am still waiting for my poet.

Baroness — Who is that ?

Mme. de Céran — An unknown.

Baroness — Young ?

Mme. de Céran — I know nothing about him. But I am sure — It is his first work. It is Gaïac who brought him to me. You know Gaïac of the *Conservateur*. They ought to be here by nine — I don't understand —

Baroness — I shall benefit by the opportunity. But it's neither for the savant nor the poet that I've come : it's for *him*, my dear, for Bellac, — I don't know him, fancy. He's so charming, it seems. The Princess Okolitch is crazy over him, you know. Where is he ? Oh, show him to me, Countess.

Mme. de Céran — Why, I'm looking for him, and I — [*Seeing BELLAC enter with SUZANNE.*] There !

Baroness — Is that he who is coming in there with Mlle. de Villiers ?

Mme. de Cérán [*in surprise*] — Yes, the very same.

Baroness — Oh, how nice he is, my dear, how nice he is !
And do you let him go like that, with that little girl ?

Mme. de Cérán [*aside, contemplating SUZANNE and BELLAC*]
— This is singular.

Melchior — And Roger, Countess, may I press his hand ?

Mme. de Cérán — I doubt if you can just now : he must be in the midst of work. [*DUCHESS and ROGER enter. Aside.*]
Hm ? with the Duchess. What's going on now ?

Roger [*to the DUCHESS, in great excitement*] — There ! did you hear, aunt ?

* *Duchess* — Yes, but I didn't see.

Roger — It was certainly a kiss that time !

Duchess — Yes, and a tight one ! Mercy ! who can it be that kisses like that here ?

Roger — Who ? who ?

Duchess — [*seeing MME. DE CÉRAN approach*] — Here's your mother.

Mme. de Cérán — What, Roger, not at your work ?

Roger — No, mother, I —

Mme. de Cérán — Well, but your *tumuli* ?

Roger — I have time enough ; I'll spend the night at it, I —
and then, one day more or less —

Mme. de Cérán — Do you think so ? The minister is waiting, my dear boy.

Roger — Well, mother, let him wait ! [*Draws off.*]

Mme. de Cérán [*stupefied*] — Duchess, what does this mean ?

Duchess — Say, isn't there going to be some insanity read to us this evening — a tragedy or that sort of thing ?

Mme. de Cérán — Yes.

Duchess — Well, and your reading is in the other drawing-room, isn't it ? Get me rid of it. I need it done, and the sooner the better.

Mme. de Cérán — But why ?

Duchess — I'll tell you that during the tragedy.

Servant [*announcing*] — The Viscount de Gaïac ; M. des Millets !

Duchess — There ! that's your poet now.

Murmurs from the Ladies — The poet ? it is the poet ! the young poet ! Where ? where ?

Gaïac — I have to excuse myself to you, Countess ; but my paper detained me. [*Low.*] I was preparing a notice of your

party. [*Aloud.*] M. des Millets, my friend, the tragic poet, whose talent you are immediately to have the power of appraising.

Des Millets [*bowing*] — Your Ladyship —

Duchess [*to ROGER*] — Is that the young poet? Well, he is entirely new.

Mme. Arriégo [*low, to the other Ladies*] — Hideous!

Baroness [*same*] — Quite gray!

Mme. de Saint-Réault [*same*] — Bald!

Mme. de Loudan [*same*] — No talent! He is too ugly, my dear!

Mme. de Céran [*to DES MILLETS*] — We are most fortunate, my guests and I, monsieur, in the favor you are willing to do us.

Mme. de Loudan [*approaching*] — The virginity of a success! Monsieur! how grateful we are!

Des Millets [*confused*] — Ah, madame!

Mme. de Céran — Then this is your first work, monsieur?

Des Millets — Oh, I have written poems.

Gaïac — And poems crowned by the Academy, your Ladyship. — We are laureate.

Jeanne [*low, to PAUL, with admiration*] — Laureate!

Paul [*to JEANNE*] — *Mediocritas!*

Mme. de Céran — And this is the first time you attempt the theater? For that matter, maturity of age guarantees maturity of talent.

Des Millets — Alas, Countess, it is fifteen years since my piece was written.

Ladies — Fifteen years! Is it possible? Truly!

Gaïac — Oh, what faith Des Millets has! We must uphold those who have faith, mustn't we, ladies?

Mme. de Loudan — Yes, that is right, certainly. — We must encourage tragedy, mustn't we, General? tragedy —

General [*interrupting his conversation with VIROT*] — Huh? Ah, yes, tragedy! "Horace"! "Cinna"! [*By Corneille.*] We must! Certainly! A tragedy for the people must — [*To DES MILLETS.*] May we know the title?

Des Millets — "Philip Augustus."

General — Very fine subject indeed! Military subject! — It is in verse, of course?

Des Millets — Oh, General — a tragedy! [*always in verse in French.*]

General — And in several acts, probably ?

Des Millets — Five !

General [*very loud*] — Ha ! Hoh ! [*Softly.*] So much the better ! so much the better !

Jeanne [*low to PAUL*] — Five acts ! How fortunate ! We shall have time to —

Paul — Hush !

Mme. de Loudan — A well-sustained work !

Mme. de Saint-Réault — Great effort !

Mme. Arriégo — It must be encouraged !

[SUZANNE is heard to laugh.]

Mme. de Céran — Suzanne !

Duchess [*to MME. DE CÉRAN*] — There, take away that second Euripides — come, and his showman, and the lot of them !

Mme. de Céran — Well, ladies, come into the large drawing-room for the reading. [*To DES MILLETS.*] Are you ready, monsieur ?

Des Millets — At your orders, Countess.

Paul [*low, to JEANNE*] — Young ladies first !

Mme. de Céran — Come, ladies !

Mme. de Loudan [*stopping her*] — Oh, first, Countess, *do* let us carry out our little conspiracy, these ladies and me. [*Going up to BELLAC, says beseechingly*] — M. Bellac ?

Bellac — Marquise ?

Mme. de Loudan — We implore one favor of you.

Bellac [*graciously*] — The favor you do me in asking me for it.

All the Ladies — Oh, how sweet !

Mme. de Loudan — This poetical work will probably take up the entire evening ; it will be its last radiance. Give us something beforehand. Oh, just as little as you please ! We won't tax genius ! But something ! Talk ! Your words will be received like the Biblical manna !

Suzanne — Yes. Oh, M. Bellac !

Mme. Arriégo — Do be nice !

Baroness — We are at your feet !

Bellac [*deprecatingly*] — Oh, ladies —

Mme. de Loudan — Help us, Lucy ; you, his Muse ! You ask him to !

Lucy — Certainly, I ask it.

Suzanne — And as for me, I want it !

Murmurs — Oh ! oh !

Mme. de Céran — Suzanne!

Bellac — Now that violence is used —

Mme. de Loudan — Ah, he consents! an easy-chair!

[*The Ladies crowd around him.*]

Mme. Arriégo — A table?

Mme. de Loudan — Would you like us to draw back a little?

Mme. de Céran — A little room, ladies!

Bellac — Oh, pray, nothing that recalls —

*Viro*t [to the GENERAL] — Ah, but take care: the law is popular.

All — Hush!

Bellac — I beg of you, no stage setting — nothing that proclaims —

*Viro*t — Yes, that's so. But the electors?

General — I am irremovable! [Senator for life.]

Ladies — Hush! oh, hush! Ah, General!

Bellac — Nothing that smells of the lesson, the lecture, the pedant. Pray, ladies, let us chat together: simply ask me questions.

Mme. de Loudan [with clasped hands] — Oh, Bellac! something from your book?

Mme. Arriégo [same] — From your book, yes!

Suzanne [same] — Oh, M. Bellac!

Bellac — Irresistible entreaties! Yet suffer me to resist them. Before being everybody's — my book shall not be anybody's.

Mme. de Loudan [meaningly] — Not even — one solitary person's?

Bellac — Ah, Marquise, as Fontenelle says to *Mme. de Coulanges*, "Take care! perhaps there is a secret there."

All the Ladies — Ah, charming! oh, charming!

Baroness [low, to *MME. DE LOUDAN*] — He has a great deal of wit.

Mme. de Loudan [same] — Something better than wit.

Baroness [same] — What do you mean?

Mme. de Loudan [same] — Wings! You'll see, wings!

Bellac — This is neither the place, nor indeed the hour, you will agree, ladies, to sound the depths of any of those eternal problems in which delight the soaring souls like yours, unceasingly tormented by the mysterious enigmas of life and the Beyond.

Ladies — Ah, the Beyond, my dear, the Beyond!

Bellac — But with this reserve, I am at your commands. And stay — at the very thought there comes back to me one of those questions forever agitated, never solved, upon which I would request your permission to express myself in a word or two.

Ladies — Yes, yes ! speak !

Bellac [*seating himself*] — I will speak, then, with an aim at a triple target: to obey you first, ladies ; [*looking at MME. DE LOUDAN*] to bring back a wandering spirit —

Murmurs from the Ladies — That is Mme. de Loudan.

Baroness [*low, to MME. DE LOUDAN, who modestly droops her eyes*] — That's you, my dear.

Bellac [*looking at LUCY*] — And to combat an adversary who is most dangerous — in every way.

Murmurs from the Ladies — That's Lucy ! Lucy ! Lucy !

Bellac — It concerns Love !

Ladies — Ah-h ! ah-h !

Duchess [*aside*] — For a change !

Suzanne — Bravo ! [*Low murmurs.*]

Jeanne [*to PAUL*] — That girl is getting on finely !

Bellac — Love ! Weakness which is a strength ! sentiment which is a religion ! the only one, perhaps, which has not one atheist !

Ladies — Ah-h ! ah-h ! Charming !

Mme. de Loudan [*to the BARONESS*] — His wings, my dear — see them !

Bellac — I was led this morning to speak — before the Princess, apropos of German literature — about a certain philosophy which makes instinct the base and the rule of all our actions and all our thoughts.

Ladies [*protesting*] — Oh ! oh-h !

Bellac — Well, I seize this occasion to declare vehemently that that opinion is not mine, and that I repel it with all the energy of a soul that is proud of existing !

Ladies — First-rate ! That is admirable !

Baroness [*low, to MME. DE LOUDAN*] — What a pretty hand !

Bellac — No, ladies, no ! Love is not, as the German philosopher says, a pure species-passion, a deceptive illusion whereby Nature dazzles man to achieve its own ends ; no, a hundred times no, if we have a soul !

Ladies — Yes, yes !

Suzanne — Bravo !

Duchess [*low, to ROGER*] — She is certainly doing this for a purpose.

Bellac — Let us leave to the sophists and to vulgar natures those theories which abase the heart : let us answer by silence, that tongue of oblivion !

Ladies — Charming !

Bellac — God forbid that I should go so far as to deny the sovereign influence of beauty on the wavering will of men ! [*Looking around him.*] I see too much before me wherewith to refute myself victoriously !

Ladies — Ah-h ! ah-h !

Roger [*to the DUCHESS*] — He looked at *her* !

Duchess — Yes.

Bellac — But above that perceptible and perishable beauty there is another, unvanquished by time, invisible to the eyes, and which only the purified spirit contemplates and loves with an immaterial love. That love, ladies, is L-l-love ; that is to say, the coupling of two souls and the winging of their flight far from terrestrial mire — into the infinite blue of the Ideal !

Ladies — Bravo ! bravo !

Duchess [*to herself, half audibly*] — There's a rigmarole for you.

Bellac [*looking at her*] — That love, mocked at by some, denied by others, unknown to the greater number, — I too could say, with my hand upon my heart, "and yet it exists !" In the souls of the chosen few, as Proudhon says —

Several Voices [*protesting*] — Oh ! oh ! Proudhon —

Mme. de Loudan — Oh, Bellac !

Bellac — A writer I am astonished at myself and apologize for quoting here [as a revolutionary] — in the souls of a chosen few, love has no organs.

Ladies — Ah ! oh ! noble ! charming !

Duchess [*breaking forth*] — Well ! there's twaddle for you, with a vengeance !

Ladies — Oh-h ! oh-h ! Duchess !

Bellac [*bowing to the DUCHESS*] — And yet it exists ! Noble hearts have felt it, great poets have sung it, and in the apothecic heaven of dreams may be seen radiantly seated those immortal figures, immaculate proof of an immortal and psychic love, — Beatrice, Laura de Noves —

Duchess — Laura ! But she had eleven children, my dear sir !

Ladies — Duchess !

Duchess — Eleyen ! You call that psychic, do you !

Mme. de Loudan — They 'were not Petrarch's, you know,
Duchess : we must be just.

Bellac — Héloïse —

Duchess — Ho ! she —

Bellac — And their sisters of yesterday : Elvira, Eloa ! and many others still, unknown or known : for it is more numerous than we should think, that phalanx of chaste and secret loves. I leave it to every woman's judgment !

Ladies — Ah ! yes ! that's true, my dear !

Bellac — No ! no ! the soul has its language which is its own, its aspirations, its pleasures, and its tortures, which are its own, in a word its life. And if it is attached to the body, that is only as the wing is attached to the bird : to buoy it up to the heights !

Ladies — Ah ! ah-h ! ah-h-h ! Bravo !

Bellac [*rising*] — This is what modern science must comprehend [*looking at SAINT-RÉAULT*] — she whom a leaden materialism rivets to the earth ; and I would add, since our revered master and friend has just made an allusion — a little premature, it is true — to a loss which science, I trust, will not soon have to mourn, I would add [*gazing at TOULONNIER, to whom SAINT-RÉAULT is just then talking*] — speaking for myself also, to our rulers : this is what should be taught to that youth which Revel has instructed with his words, by him, whoever he may be, who may be chosen to instruct it after him ; and not alone — I ask pardon from our illustrious brother — not with the insufficient authority of acquired rights, of erudition, and of age, but with the irresistible might of a voice still young and of an ardor that is not extinct !

All — Bravo ! Charming ! Exquisite ! Delicious !

[*All rise. A deep bass hum of voices. The Ladies surround BELLAC.*]

Duchess [*aside*] — One on you, Saint-Réault !

Paul [*same*] — Second candidacy !

Mme. de Loudan — Oh, M. Bellac !

Suzanne — My dear professor !

Baroness — What a head for wit !

Mme. Arriégo — It is beautiful ! beautiful ! beautiful !

Bellac — Ah, ladies, I have only rendered your ideas !

Mme. de Loudan — Ah, charmer, charmer !

Bellac — Then we are reconciled, Marquise ?

Mme. de Loudan — Could any one remain stern with you ?
[*Presenting the BARONESS.*] The Baroness des Boines, this is : one whom you have just enchanted and who is altogether yours.

Baroness — I have been weeping, monsieur !

Bellac — Oh, Baroness !

Mme. Arriégo — Wasn't it superb ?

Baroness — Superb !

Suzanne — And how hot it is ! [*BELLAC feels for his handkerchief.*] Haven't you one ? Here ! [*Gives him her own.*]

Bellac — Oh ! mademoiselle !

Mme. de Céran — Suzanne, what are you thinking of ?

Suzanne [*to BELLAC, who starts to return her handkerchief*] — No, no, keep it, I am going to get you something to drink.

Mme. de Loudan [*going up toward the table before which SAINT-RÉAULT has spoken, and on which is the salver with glasses of eau sucrée*] — Yes, yes, something to drink !

Roger [*low, to the DUCHESS*] — Aunt, look !

Duchess [*same*] — All that — that, all of it, is too reckless to be guilty.

Bellac [*low, to LUCY*] — And you — are you convinced ?

Lucy — Oh, I think the concept of love — No, later —

Bellac [*same*] — Directly ?

Lucy — Yes. — Will you have a glass of water ? [*Goes up the stage.*]

Mme. de Loudan [*arriving with a glass of water*] — No ! I ! Mercy on me, it's pure water ! The secret of nectar is lost.

Mme. Arriégo [*arriving with a glass of water*] — A glass of water, M. Bellac ?

Mme. de Loudan — No, no ! Take mine ! me !

Mme. Arriégo — No, me ! me !

Bellac [*with embarrassment*] — But —

Lucy [*holding out another glass to him*] — Here !

Mme. de Loudan — It's going to be Lucy, I'm sure — Oh, but I am jealous ! — No, me, me !

Suzanne [*arriving with another glass of water and pressing it on him*] — Not at all ! I am to be the one — ah, ha ! the fourth thief ! [*i.e. the one in the story who comes last and succeeds.*]

Lucy — But, mademoiselle —

Mme. de Loudan [*aside*] — That chit is cheeky enough —

Roger [*to the DUCHESS, indicating SUZANNE*] — Aunt !

Duchess — Well, what's she at now ?

Roger — It's since Bellac's arrival.

[*Doors at rear open; the large drawing-room appears lit up.*]

Duchess — Now for it ! [*To MME. DE CÉRAN.*] Take away your crowd : mind, this very minute.

Mme. de Céran — Come, ladies, — the reading of our tragedy ! Let us pass into the large drawing-room ! After which we will go and take tea in the conservatory.

Lucy, Bellac, and Suzanne [*each aside*] — In the conservatory !

Roger [*low, to DUCHESS*] — Did you see Suzanne ? She gave a start.

Duchess [*same*] — Bellac positively jumped.

Mme. de Loudan — Come, ladies, the Muse calls us !

[*All begin slowly to pass into the great drawing-room in the rear.*]

General [*to PAUL*] — What, my dear sub-prefect, three years !

Mme. de Céran — Come, General !

General [*who is talking with PAUL*] — Ah, yes, Countess, yes, the tragedy ! You are right, we must encourage that ! — Five acts — come !

Jeanne [*low, to PAUL*] — It's an understood thing — right off !

Paul [*same*] — Yes, yes ! It's understood.

General [*turning again to PAUL*] — So you've been three years sub-prefect in the same place ? And yet they say this government isn't conservative !

Paul — Oh, that's very good, senator, very good !

General [*modestly*] — Oh — !

Toulonnier [*to MME. DE LOUDAN*] — That is understood, Marquise ! [*To MME. ARRIÉGO.*] At your disposal, dear madame !

Bellac [*to TOULONNIER*] — Then, M. Secretary-General, I may hope — ?

Toulonnier [*giving him his hand*] — Why, my dear friend, that comes to you by right : you know we are all yours.

[*They go out through the rear.*]

General [to PAUL, going up] — And what is the spirit [political] of your department, my dear sub-prefect? You ought to know, by George! in three years.

Paul — Good heavens, General, its spirit¹ — I'll tell you — its spirit — it hasn't any!

[*They go out through the rear. SUZANNE in passing brushes the keys of the open piano with a loud clang.*]

Mme. de Cérán [to SUZANNE, severely] — Well, Suzanne, really —!

Suzanne [with an air of surprise] — Why, what is it, cousin?

Duchess [stopping her and looking her in the face] — What does ail you?

Suzanne [smiling nervously] — Me! I'm having a good time, I'm sure!

Duchess — What ails you?

Suzanne — Nothing, aunt, for I'm having a good time, I tell you.

Duchess — What ails you?

Suzanne [with a choking sob] — I'm sick at heart, so! [*Enters the large drawing-room and slams the doors violently.*]

Duchess [to herself] — It's love, though, or I don't know the symptoms — and I do know 'em!

SCENE II.

Present: ROGER, the DUCHESS, MME. DE CÉRAN.

Mme. de Cérán [to the DUCHESS] — Come, say, what is the matter with him? [*To ROGER.*] Why aren't you at your report? What's going on, I want to know?

Roger — You were too near right, mother!

Mme. de Cérán — Suzanne?

Roger — Suzanne — and that man!

Duchess — Be still! you are just talking folderol.

Roger — But —

Duchess [to MME. DE CÉRAN] — See here! you caught her with a letter in her hands.

Mme. de Cérán — From Bellac?

Duchess — I don't know anything about it!

Roger — What!

Duchess — Disguised hand, not signed. I don't know anything about it!

¹ The real play in the original is on *esprit*, wit.

Roger — Yes, yes. Oh, he doesn't compromise himself — but listen —

Duchess — Be still! [*To MME. DE CÉRAN.*] Listen: "I shall arrive Thursday —"

Roger — To-day! Consequently it's he or I!

Duchess — Will you be still, I say! "Thursday: evening, at ten, in the conservatory."

Roger — "Have a sick headache."

Duchess — Oh yes, I forgot: "Have a sick headache."

Mme. de Céran — Why, it's an appointment!

Duchess — Yes, that's evident.

Mme. de Céran — With her!

Duchess — That I don't know anything about.

Roger — Oh, I believe, for all that —

Duchess — Oh, you believe! you *believe*! When it comes to accusing a woman, — mind, a woman! — it isn't enough to believe, you've got to see, and when you've seen and seen again and again — then! — uh — then — well, then it isn't true yet! Ah-h! [*Aside.*] It's always well to say these things to young folks!

Mme. de Céran — An assignation! Didn't I say so? Well, well! she doesn't belie her birth! In my house! Oh, the trollop! Now, Duchess, what are you going to do? Say quick! I have asked them to begin without me; but I can't stay here forever! There, they've begun: I hear the poet. What are you going to do, I'd like to know?

Duchess — What am I going to do? Why, stay here — just. A quarter to ten. If she goes to that appointment, she's got to pass by here, and I shall see her.

Roger — And if she does go to it, aunt?

Duchess — If she goes to it, nephew? Well, I shall go too, and say nothing; and I shall see how far they have got; and when I've seen how far they have got — why, then it will be time enough to do something.

Roger [*seating himself*] — Well! let us wait.

Mme. de Céran — Oh, there's no need of you, my dear: we take care of this. You have your report, your *tumuli* — go on! [*Pushes him toward the door.*]

Roger — Pardon me, mother, it concerns —

Mme. de Céran — It concerns your position. There, go on — go!

Roger [*holding back*] — Pardon me for disobeying you, but —

Mme. de Céran — Well, indeed, Roger — !

Roger — Mother, I beg of you — besides, this evening it would be impossible for me to write a line : I am too — I don't know — I am much disturbed — I have a feeling of not having done for that girl what I ought to have done. I am greatly stirred up — but just think, mother — Suzanne ! — Why, it would be dreadful ! — My situation is frightful ! —

Duchess — Oh, come, you exaggerate !

Roger [*with a sudden start*] — Great heavens !

Mme. de Céran — Roger ! what is in your mind ?

Roger — Why, I am her tutor ; indeed, I have charge of her soul ! — Oh, just think of my responsibility ! the honor of that child ! — Why, it is a sacred deposit I have guard over ! — Oh, I might have let her fortune be stolen and be less criminal ! And you talk to me about *tumuli* ! Ugh ! the *tumuli* ! the *tumuli* ! — It's a question of *tumuli*, isn't it ? To the devil with the *tumuli* !

Mme. de Céran [*terrified*] — Oh !

Duchess [*aside*] — Well ! well !

Roger — Now I mean to say that if this is true, if that scoundrel has dared to forget all he owed to himself, to her, to us — then I go straight to him, and slap his face in public — do you hear me ?

Mme. de Céran — My son !

Roger — Yes, in public !

Mme. de Céran — But this is wandering in your mind —
Duchess — pardon —

Duchess — What ! Why, I love him better than that — you know —

Mme. de Céran — Roger !

Roger — No, mother, no ! this concerns me — I will wait —
[*Sits himself.*]

Mme. de Céran — Very well — I will wait too.

Roger — You ?

Mme. de Céran — Yes, and I will talk to her —

Duchess — Ah, now, take care —

Mme. de Céran — Oh, not right out, don't worry ; but if she persists, it shall be at least with full knowledge why ! — I will wait. [*Sits down.*]

Duchess — And not for long. Five minutes to ten ! If she is to have a sick headache, it won't hold off much longer.
[*As the rear door of the drawing-room opens softly.*] Hush !

Roger — There she is ! [*In proportion as the door opens, the poet's voice is more clearly heard declaiming :*]

“ Earth from that villain brood my arm shall purge !
And as my vengeance to the death I urge,
Recoiling not before the very tomb — ”

[*JEANNE appears. The voice dies gradually out as the door closes.*]

Duchess [*aside*] — The sub-prefectess !

SCENE III.

Jeanne [*stopping abashed on seeing them*] — Oh ! —

Duchess — What's here ! — So you've had enough already, it seems ?

Jeanne — Oh no, your Grace. — But it's because —

Duchess — It's because you don't love tragedy. I see that.

Jeanne — Yes — oh yes !

Duchess — Oh, there's no need of defending yourself, there are more than seventeen others just like you. [*Aside.*] What's she up to ? [*Aloud.*] Then it's bad, is it ?

Jeanne — Oh, just the contrary.

Duchess — “ Just the contrary,” as you'd say if somebody trod on your toes ?

Jeanne — No, no ! — There are even things — things — there's one admirable line !

Duchess — Already !

Jeanne — And one that was greatly applauded. [*Aside.*] What am I to do ?

Duchess — Oh ! Ah ! And what were the words of that admirable line ?

Jeanne — “ Honor is like a god. — It is like a god that — ” I am afraid of spoiling it by quoting it badly.

Duchess — Mph ! Now take care, child, take care ! And you are going away in spite of that admirable line ?

Jeanne — Indeed, it is to my great regret. [*Aside.*] What am I to say ? [*As an idea strikes her.*] Ah ! [*Aloud.*] The fact is, I am not sure but the fatigues of travel — or the heat — I — I don't feel very well !

Duchess — Ah !

Jeanne — Yes, my eyes — I don't see very clearly — I think — I — I've got a sick headache !

Mme. de Céran, Duchess, and Roger [all rising] — A sick headache?

Jeanne [in dismay, aside] — What's the matter with them now?

Duchess [after a silence] — Well, that doesn't surprise me : it's in the air.

Jeanne — Oh, have you got one, too?

Duchess — I? Oh! — they don't come any more at my age — Ah, so you have it — well, but that must be cured, child.

Jeanne — Yes, I'm going out for a little walk — you'll excuse me — won't you?

Duchess — Go ahead — go ahead!

Jeanne [holding her head as she goes] — It's making me quite sick — oh dear! [*Aside.*] That makes it straight! gracious me, Paul would have had a fine time getting out of it. [*Goes out by the garden door.*]

SCENE IV.

Duchess [to Roger] — Oh! huh! you believe, do you? come now, you believe?

Roger — Oh, aunt, this is just a coincidence!

Duchess — A coincidence, perhaps; but you see how one can get on the wrong track, and that he must never — [*Drawing-room door opens; same effect as before.*] Ah now, this time —

[*Voice of the poet DES MILLETS heard through the half-open door and gradually growing faint as the door closes:*

“And be there dozens, e'en a thousand spears,” —

Duchess — What a voice that old Tyrtæus has!

“I'd go alone, and brave their futile wrath,
To ask the reason of their coward fears —”

LUCY appears, going toward the garden door.

Mme. de Céran and Roger — Lucy!

SCENE V.

Duchess — What, Lucy, you taking yourself off!

Lucy [stopping] — Excuse me : I didn't see you.

Duchess — That was an admirable line indeed.

“Honor is the god —”

Lucy [corrects, resuming her course] —

“Like a god which —”

Duchess — Yes indeed, it's the very same. [*Ten o'clock strikes. LUCY reaches the door.*] And you are going to quit in spite of it?

Lucy [turning round] — Yes, I need to take the air. I've got a sick headache! [*Goes out.*]

All three [sitting down] — Oh!

SCENE VI.

Duchess — Well! really, something queer is going on.

Mme. de Céran — It's another coincidence! —

Duchess — Another! Oh no, not this time! What, everybody, then, everybody — except Suzanne! Come now, there's something — she won't come. I'll bet she won't come. [*Drawing-room door suddenly opens, letting through a burst of tragic but rapid and confused voice; and SUZANNE enters precipitately, as if she wished to rejoin some one.*] Here she is!

SCENE VII.

Mme. de Céran [rising] — Are you leaving the drawing-room, mademoiselle?

Suzanne [trying to escape] — Yes, cousin.

Mme. de Céran — Stay here.

Suzanne — But, cousin —

Mme. de Céran — Stay here — and sit down!

Suzanne [dropping on a piano-stool, on which she twirls to the side of the speaker at each reply she makes] — There!

Mme. de Céran — And why are you leaving the drawing-room, pray?

Suzanne — Well, because I got tired of what that old gentleman is reciting in there.

Roger — Is that the real reason?

Suzanne — I'm going out because Lucy has gone out, if you must have another!

Mme. de Céran — Miss Watson, mademoiselle —

Suzanne — Oh, of course! She's perfection, the ideal, the rare bird, Miss Watson is! She can do everything — while I —!

Roger — While you, Suzanne —

Mme. de Céran — There, let me talk to her. While you, mademoiselle, run the streets alone —

Suzanne — Like Lucy!

Mme. de Céran — You dress in the most extravagant fashion —

Suzanne — Like Lucy!

Mme. de Céran — You monopolize Bellac, you make a show of talking with him —

Suzanne — Like Lucy! Doesn't *she* talk to him — [*turning toward ROGER*] and to this gentleman, too?

Mme. de Céran — Oh, but in private! You know very well what I mean.

Suzanne — Oh, as for privacies, one doesn't need to talk them, he can write them — [*looking at ROGER and speaking in a low voice*] disguising his handwriting!

Mme. de Céran — What?

Roger [*low, to the DUCHESS*] — Aunt!

Duchess [*same*] — Hush!

Mme. de Céran — Indeed —!

Suzanne — Indeed, Lucy talks to whoever she likes; Lucy goes out when she likes; Lucy dresses as she likes. I want to do what Lucy does, seeing that everybody thinks so much of her!

Mme. de Céran — And do you know why they think so much of her, mademoiselle? It is because, in spite of the independent ways of her nationality, she is reserved, serious, educated —

Suzanne [*rising*] — Oh, indeed! and now what about me? So I haven't been all that, have I? Yes indeed, for six months, till this very evening at five o'clock, I kept at work, I held myself in, and I studied, and as much as she did! and I knew as much as she did! and the objective and the subjective and all that stuff! Well, and what good has it done me? Does anybody care any more for me? Don't they treat me as a little girl just the same? And everybody, yes, everybody! [*Looking askant at ROGER.*] Who pays attention to just me? Suzanne! ho! Suzanne! As if Suzanne amounts to anything! And all because I'm not an old Englishwoman!

Roger — Suzanne!

Suzanne — Oh yes, stand up for her, you! Oh, I know very well what one has got to be to please you — so! [*Taking the DUCHESS' eyeglasses and putting them on her nose.*] *Æsthetic:*

Schopenhauer! The Ego! the non-Ego! et cetera! — nyah! nyah! nyah!

Mme. de Céran — Make an end of your hoydenish performances, mademoiselle!

Suzanne [*making a curtsy*] — Thank you, cousin!

Mme. de Céran — Yes, your hoydenish performances! And these senseless things you do —

Suzanne — Seeing I'm only a hoyden, it isn't surprising I do senseless things. [*Growing excited.*] Well, yes, there, I do senseless things! and I do them on purpose, and I'll do them again!

Mme. de Céran — No more with me, I'll warrant you.

Suzanne — Yes, I went out with M. Bellac; yes, I whispered with M. Bellac; yes, I have a secret with M. Bellac!

Roger — You dare —!

Suzanne — And he is a greater scholar than you! And he is better than you! And I love him better than you! Yes, I love him, so! I love him!

Mme. de Céran — I wish to believe that you do not know the gravity —

Suzanne — Yes! yes! I know the gravity! yes!

Mme. de Céran — Then listen to me! Before committing the new folly you threaten us with, stop and think! The publicity, the escapades, the scandal, become you less than anybody else, Mlle. de Villiers!

Duchess — Ah now, take care!

Mme. de Céran — Indeed, Duchess, at least she ought to know —

Suzanne [*repressing her tears*] — Oh, I know!

Duchess — What!

Suzanne [*throwing herself into the DUCHESS' arms and weeping*] — Oh, aunt, aunt!

Duchess — Suzanne, there, there, child. [*To MME. DE CÉRAN.*] A lot of need there was to beat that bush, truly. [*To SUZANNE.*] There, what is it you know? what is it?

[*Takes her in her lap.*]

Suzanne [*crying as she talks*] — Oh, what! I don't know; but I know very well there's something against me, so now — and has been for a long time!

Duchess — Who told you so?

Suzanne — Oh, nobody — everybody — the people that stare at you, that whisper, that stop talking when you come in —

that kiss you, that call you "poor little thing!" — If you think children don't notice all that —!

Duchess [wiping her eyes] — There, dearie, there —

Suzanne — And at the convent too! I saw very well I wasn't like the others, there now! — Oh yes, I saw it! They were always talking — about "my father" and "my mother" — what for? because I hadn't any! And once at recess I was playing with a big girl: I don't know what I did to her — she got mad — and all at once she called me "Miss Illegitimate!" She didn't know what that meant, nor I either! — Her mother had said it before her. She owned as much to me afterward, when we had made up. — Oh, but I was miserable! [*Sobbing.*] We hunted in the dictionary, but we didn't find anything — or nothing we understood. [*Angrily.*] But what does it mean, anyway? — What is it I've done that I am not like other people? that everything I do is wrong? Is it my fault?

Duchess [kissing her] — No, my pet. No, my dearie —

Mme. de Céran — I am sorry —

Suzanne [sobbing] — Well then, why am I reproached with it, if it isn't my fault? Oh, I am a burden to everybody here! I know it very well; I don't want to stay here any longer; I want to go away! — Nobody here cares for me, nobody!

Roger [much agitated] — Why do you say that, Suzanne? It isn't so! on the contrary, everybody here — and I —

Suzanne [rising in a tempest] — You!

Roger — Yes, I! and I swear it to you.

Suzanne — You? oh, stop! — Let me alone! I hate you! I never want to see you again! never! — Do you understand? [*Goes toward the garden door.*]

Roger — Suzanne! no, but Suzanne! where are you going?

Suzanne — Where am I going? I'm going to take a walk. I'm going where I please, and right away!

Roger — What for, just now? What are you going out for?

Suzanne — What for? [*Comes down toward him.*] What for? [*Looking him square in the eyes.*] I've got a sick headache!!!

[*All rise. SUZANNE goes out by the garden door.*]

SCENE VIII.

Roger [in great agitation] — Well, aunt! is it clear now?

Duchess [rising] — Less and less!

Roger — Very well, I'm going to see!

Mme. de Céran — Roger! where are you going?

Roger — Where am I going! Well, to do what my aunt said, find out how far they have got! and I swear to you that if it is true — if that man has dared —

Mme. de Céran — If it is true! — *I will turn him outdoors!*

Roger — Well! if it is true — *I will kill him!* [*Goes out by the garden door.*]

Duchess — And if it is true, *I will make them get married!* — Only it isn't true. — Well, we shall see pretty soon: come! [*Tries to draw MME. DE CÉRAN away. They hear loud applause in the drawing-room. Noise of chairs and conversation.*]

Mme. de Céran [*hesitating*] — But —

Duchess — Eh? what? another admirable line? No, it's the end of the act! Quick before they get here!

Mme. de Céran — But my guests?

Duchess — Huh? your guests? They'll go to sleep again all right without you! — come, come! [*They go out.*]

Various Voices — Most beautiful! Grand art! So lofty!

Paul [*at the rear door*] — Charming, that act! Wasn't it, General!

General [*yawning very audibly*] — Charming! scored another hit!

[*PAUL adroitly slips away, gains the garden door, and disappears. Curtain falls.*]

ACT III.

SCENE: *Large conservatory drawing-room lighted with gas. Fountain with basin, furnishings, chairs, clumps of shrubbery, clusters of growing plants, behind which one can easily run and hide.*

SCENE I.

The DUCHESS and MME. DE CÉRAN enter by right rear, and hesitate, first looking around, then speaking in a low voice.

Duchess — Nobody?

Mme. de Céran — Nobody.

Duchess — Good! [*Comes down front and stops.*] Three sick headaches!

Mme. de Céran — It is unheard-of, though, that I should have to leave the poet in this way —

Duchess — Oh, pshaw — your poet reads his verses! A poet, you know, so long as it can read its verses —!

Mme. de Céran — But Roger's passion frightens me! I have never seen him so, never! — What are you doing there, aunt?

Duchess — I'm shutting off this fountain, as you see.

Mme. de Céran — What for?

Duchess — So as to hear better, child!

Mme. de Céran — He's in the garden, I don't know where — Whoever watches her, whoever follows her — What's going to happen? Oh, the little wretch! — What, Duchess, are you shutting off the gas?

Duchess — No, I'm turning it down.

Mme. de Céran — What for?

Duchess — Why, so as to see better, child!

Mme. de Céran — So as to —

Duchess — Good gracious! the less they can see us, the better we can see. — Three sick headaches! and only one appointment. — Do you get hold of anything in it?

Mme. de Céran — What I don't get hold of is that M. Bel-lac —

Duchess — And I, that Suzanne —

Mme. de Céran — Oh! she —

Duchess — She? We're going to see, anyway. They can come now, everything is ready.

Mme. de Céran — If Roger finds them here — together — he is capable of —

Duchess — Pshaw! pshaw! we've got to see — we've got to see!

Mme. de Céran — But —

Duchess — Hush! Do you hear?

Mme. de Céran — Yes.

Duchess [*pushing* *MME. DE CÉRAN* *toward the clump on the right, front wing*] — It was time! Come!

Mme. de Céran — Why, do you want to listen?

Duchess [*from her hiding-place*] — Really, if we are to hear, there's nothing else to do, don't you see? There, now, in this corner we shall be like fairy queens. We'll leave when it's necessary, don't worry. Has anybody come in?

Mme. de Céran [*also in hiding, looking through the branches*] — Yes.

Duchess — Which of the two?

Mme. de Céran — It's she —

Duchess — Suzanne? —

Mme. de Céran — Yes! [*In surprise.*] No!

Duchess — What, not she?

Mme. de Céran — No! not low-necked! It's somebody else!

Duchess — Somebody else? Who?

Mme. de Céran — I can't make out.

Jeanne — Come on now, Paul!

Mme. de Céran — The sub-prefectess!

Duchess — Again!

SCENE II.

Jeanne [*to PAUL*] — What are you doing at that door, anyway?

Paul [*entering at right door: speaks from the side scene*] — Prudence being the mother of security, I am prudently placing us in security!

Jeanne — How?

Paul — Like this — [*Sound of door creaking.*]

Jeanne [*in alarm*] — Hah?

Paul [*entering*] — Great success!

Jeanne — What's that?

Paul — That? It's a flight indicator I've just put in. Yes, a bit of wood — in the door hinge. By this means, if anybody — I don't say lovers like us, that's unlikely in this precinct, but somebody escaping from a tragedy — takes refuge in this quarter, against all probability — no more danger! He opens the door, it gives out a scream, and we by another door — pst! Is that well enough calculated, hey? Ah, we statesmen! — And now, madame, as we are sheltered from indiscreet observation, I slough off the public man, the private individual reappears, and giving free rein to sentiments too long repressed, I permit you to call me *thou*.

Jeanne — That's nice! thou art charming here!

Paul — I am charming here, because I am easy in my mind here; but to kiss in the halls, as we did lately, you know — when you came to help me open my mail —?

Duchess [*aside*] — It was they!

Paul — Or as we did this evening, in the garden —

Duchess — They again!

Paul — No more of that! Too imprudent for this house — huh? What a house! Did I deceive you? It takes the ambition of being a prefect to make a man come and bore himself in such yawneries!

Mme. de Céran — Hah?

Duchess [to MME. DE CÉRAN] — Listen to that! Listen to that!

Jeanne [making him sit beside her] — Come here.

Paul [sitting down, then rising again and walking about agitatedly] — No, but what a house! Hosts, and guests, and everybody! And Mme. Arriégo! And the poet! And the Marquise! And that icy Englishwoman! And that wooden Roger! There isn't anybody but the Duchess that's got common sense.

Duchess [to MME. DE CÉRAN] — One for me!

Paul [with conviction] — But the rest — ugh!

Duchess — One for you!

Jeanne — Oh, come here, now!

Paul [sits down, then rises and walks about as before] — And the reading, and the literature! and the candidacy! Oh, that Revel candidacy! Imagine, a crafty old fellow who dies — every evening, and comes to life again every morning with another office! [Starts to sit down, then resumes.] And Saint-Réault! Oh, Saint-Réault! and the Rama-Ravanas and all that Buddha balderdash!

Mme. de Céran [indignantly] — Oh!

Duchess [laughing] — He's so funny!

Paul — And say, the other one, that ladies'-Bellac, with his Platonic love!

Jeanne [dropping her eyes] — He is a fool!

Paul [sitting down] — So you found it out, too? [Rising in fresh rage.] And the tragedy — oh, the tragedy! —

Jeanne — Why, Paul, what ails you?

Paul — And that old Philip Augustus with his admirable line! Lord, everybody has made some of those admirable lines — that's no excuse for reading them. — I've made some myself.

Jeanne — You?

Paul — Yes, I! When I was a student and not rich. I even sold them!

Jeanne — To an editor?

Paul — No, to a dentist! “The Filliad, or the Art of Filling Teeth.” Poem, three hundred lines! Thirty francs. — Listen to this: —

Jeanne — Oh no, please don’t!

Paul —

“Muse, if amongst the many ills that Heaven
In wrath to blacken all the world has given,
One o’er the others most appalls good taste,
’Tis that whose seat within the mouth is placed.”

Jeanne [*trying to stop him*] — Oh, there, Paul!

Paul —

“Ah, how alluring seems extraction then!
Imprudent! Heal the tooth, but do not draw!
Ah, pull it not, e’en though it be decayed!
Who knows but some day skillful hands of men
May fill and save it, whichsoe’er its jaw,
This lure of smiles and sound digestion’s aid.”

Duchess [*laughing*] — Ha, ha! Isn’t he amusing!

Jeanne — What a regular boy you are! Who would believe it, to see you in the drawing-room! [*Mocking him.*] “Good Heavens, senator, the democratic flood — the treaties of 1815 — ” Ha, ha, ha!

Paul — Well, and your own self, say! You come pretty close to it with the mistress of the house!

Mme. de Céran — Eih?

Paul — My compliments!

Jeanne — But, my dear, I was doing what you told me.

Paul [*mocking her*] — “I was doing what you told me!” Oh, you hypocrite, with your soft little voice! Ah, you gave it to the Countess: Joubert, and Latin, and Tocqueville! and made it all up yourself!

Mme. de Céran — What! made it up herself!

Duchess — That reconciles me to her.

Jeanne — Oh, I’ve no remorse, so there! A woman that lodges us at the two ends of the house!

Mme. de Céran [*rising*] — If I had only asked her to leave it!

Duchess — Keep still.

Jeanne — And it was just spite! Yes! yes! I’m sure of it. A woman knows well enough what new-married people are,

doesn't she? They always have something to say to each other, I mean.

Paul [tenderly] — Yes, always.

Jeanne — Always, really and truly? — always, like that?

Paul — What a lovely voice you have! I was listening to it just now — while I was talking about the treaties of 1815. Fine, sweet, enveloping — ah, the voice is music to the heart, as M. de Tocqueville says.

Jeanne — Oh, Paul! I don't want you to laugh at serious things.

Paul — Ah, well, let me be a little frisky, please: I'm so happy here! Lord! but it's a toss-up to me whether I'm prefect of Carcassonne or not, just this moment!

Jeanne — It's always a toss-up to me, sir: that's the difference!

Paul — Dear little woman! [*Kisses her hands.*]

Mme. de Céran [low, to the DUCHESS] — But this is an indiscretion.

Duchess [same] — I don't dislike it myself!

Paul — Ah, but I've such a stiff lot of arrears to make up — you understand! — not counting payments in advance. When shall we be free at present? Darling little girl, you don't know how much I adore you.

Jeanne — Yes, I know — by myself —

Paul — My Jeanne!

Jeanne — Oh, Paul! Always like that, keep saying it over, always!

Paul [very close to her and very tenderly] — Always!

Mme. de Céran [low, to the DUCHESS] — But, Duchess —

Duchess [same] — Oh, they're married!

[*Door squeaks. PAUL and JEANNE rise in alarm.*]

Paul and Jeanne — Hah!

Jeanne — Somebody's coming!

Paul — Fly! — as they say in the tragedies.

Jeanne — Quick, quick!

Paul — You see, don't you? — my precautions —

Jeanne — Already! What mean luck!

[*They escape at the left.*]

Mme. de Céran [passing to the left] — Well, it's lucky they were interrupted.

Duchess [greeting her] — My goodness, I'm sorry for it! Yes indeed: there's an end to our laughing now.

SCENE III.

BELLAC *enters by right rear.*

Bellac — What a noise that door makes !

Mme. de Céran [*low, to the DUCHESS*] — Bellac !

Duchess [*same*] — Bellac !

Bellac — Well, you can't see very well here.

Mme. de Céran — It was true ! You see it was all true.

Duchess — All ? no, there's only half of it yet !

Mme. de Céran — Oh, the other half isn't far off, you'll see !

Duchess — Anyhow, it can't be anything more than a prank, a schoolgirl's imprudence — it isn't possible. [*Door creaks.*] There she is ! Oh, dear me, my heart is beating — in matters like this there's no use being sure, you're never certain — do you see her ?

Mme. de Céran [*looking out*] — Ah ! it's she ! — And very shortly Roger, who is watching her, will be here too. Hadn't we better show ourselves, Duchess ?

Duchess — No — no — I want to know how far they've got ; I want to have a clean breast made of it.

Mme. de Céran [*still looking out*] — I am half dead with uneasiness — low-necked — it's she, it's really she —

Duchess — Oh, the little jade ! — Let me see — [*Looks through the leaves, then after a moment says :*] Hah !

Mme. de Céran — What now ?

Duchess — Look.

Mme. de Céran [*looking*] — Lucy !

Duchess — Lucy.

Mme. de Céran — What in the world does this mean ?

Duchess — Oh, I don't know yet, but I like it better already.

SCENE IV.

BELLAC and LUCY *searching for each other at the right ;* MME. DE CÉRAN and the DUCHESS *hidden on the left ;* PAUL *re-entering at left rear, followed by JEANNE, holding him back.*

Jeanne [*low, to PAUL*] — No, no, Paul ! no !

Paul [*same*] — Yes — yes ! stop a minute to see ! here at this hour it can't be anybody but lovers, I tell you — In this house ! No ! that would be too funny —

Jeanne — Look out !

Paul — Hush !



Lucy — Are you there, M. Bellac?

Paul — The Englishwoman!

Bellac — Yes, *mademoiselle*!

Paul — And the professor — “The Englishwoman and the Professor: A Fable!” Didn’t I tell you! An intrigue! An appointment! Huh! I guess I’m not going away, not much!

Jeanne — Why not?

Paul — After that, do you want to go away yourself?

Jeanne — No I don’t!

[*They hide behind a clump at left rear.*]

Lucy — Are you on this side?

Bellac — Over here! I beg your pardon — the conservatory is generally better lighted — I don’t know why, this evening — [*Goes toward her.*]

Mme. de Céran [*low, to the DUCHESS*] — Lucy! But then what about Suzanne? I’m clear off now.

Duchess [*same*] — Wait a bit: I fancy we’re going to get on again.

Lucy — But, M. Bellac, what does this kind of appointment mean? And your letter of this morning? Why should you write to me?

Bellac — Why, to talk with you, dear Miss Lucy. This is not the first time we have isolated ourselves to exchange our thoughts, is it?

Paul [*bursts out laughing; says low, to JEANNE*] — Ho! — exchange —! I didn’t know it was called that —

Bellac — Hemmed in as I am here, what other means had I of talking with you, all by yourself?

Lucy — What other? You merely had to give me your arm and leave the drawing-room with me. I am not a young French girl.

Bellac — But you are in France.

Lucy — In France, as elsewhere, I do what I like; I have no need of secrecy, and still less of mystery. You disguise your handwriting — you don’t sign it — even to your pink paper itself — Oh, how thoroughly a Frenchman you are!

Paul [*low, to JEANNE*] — Born sly.

Bellac — And how thoroughly you are yourself the austere Muse of learning, the superb Polyhymnia! the cold and proud Pierian — Come, sit down!

Lucy — No! no! And look how all your precautions have turned against us: I have lost that letter.

Duchess [*rather loud*] — I'm on!

[*LUCY moves toward the left.*]

Bellac — What is it?

Lucy — Didn't you hear anything?

Bellac — No. Ah! you lost —?

Lucy — And what do you wish him or her to think that might find it?

Duchess [*low, to MME. DE CÉRAN*] — Are you on now?

Lucy — True, there was no envelope — consequently no address —

Bellac — Not my handwriting, nor my signature — so you see I've done the right thing. Anyway, I meant well, dear Miss Lucy: pardon your professor, your friend, and — sit down, please —

Lucy — No! tell me what you have to say to me in such secrecy, and let's go in again.

Bellac [*detraining her*] — Wait! Why didn't you come to my course to-day?

Lucy — Precisely because I passed my time hunting for that letter. What had you to talk to me about?

Bellac — How impatient you are to leave me! [*Gives her a package of papers tied with a pink ribbon.*] There!

Lucy — Proofs!

Bellac [*with emotion*] — Of my book.

Lucy [*moved in turn*] — Yours? — O Bellac!

Bellac — I wanted you to be alone in knowing it before everybody, alone!

Lucy [*taking his hands with effusion*] — Ah, my friend, my friend!

Paul [*holding in his laughter*] — Oh, no! such a love-gift — whew!

[*BELLAC moves to the left.*]

Lucy — What ails you?

Bellac — No, nothing — I thought — You will read this book in which I have put my thoughts, and you will find us in perfect communion, I am sure, except on one point — Oh! that one!

Lucy — Which?

Bellac [*tenderly*] — Is it possible you do not believe in Platonic love?

Lucy — I! oh, not in the least.

Bellac [*graciously*] — Well! — But with us two?

Lucy [*innocently*] — No, that is friendship.

Bellac [sentimentally] — Pardon me! it is more than friendship and less than love!

Lucy — Then if it is more than the one and less than the other, it is neither the one nor the other. And now, thank you once more, thank you a thousand times: but let's go back in, won't you? [*Starts to leave.*]

Bellac [still detaining her] — Wait!

Lucy — No, no! let's go in.

Paul [to JEANNE] — She doesn't bite.

Bellac [holding her back] — Oh, do wait, pray! One word! One word! Enlighten me or enlighten yourself! — The problem is worth the trouble. Now see, Lucy —

Lucy [growing excited and passing over to the right] — Now see, Bellac! See, my friend, your Platonic love —! Philosophically, I say, it cannot be maintained!

Bellac — Permit me: that love is a friendship —

Lucy — If it is friendship, it is no longer love!

Bellac — But the concept is double!

Lucy — If it's double, it isn't single!

Bellac — But there is a confusion! [*Sits down.*]

Lucy — If there is a confusion, there is no longer a character! — And I go farther! [*Sits down.*]

Paul [to JEANNE] — She has bitten!

Lucy — I deny that confusion can be possible between love, which has individuation for base, and friendship, a form of sympathy — that is to say, of a thing where the Ego becomes in some sort the non-Ego. I deny it absolutely, oh, absolutely!

Duchess [low, to MME. DE CÉRAN] — I have heard people talk love often enough, but never like this.

Bellac — Oh, come, Lucy!

Lucy — Come, Bellac! Yes or no? The principal factor —

Bellac — Come, Lucy, take an instance. Suppose a certain two beings — two abstractions — two entities — a certain man, a certain woman — both loving each other, but with the vulgar, physiological love — You understand me?

Lucy — Perfectly!

Bellac — I will suppose them in a situation like this, alone in the night, together, what will happen?

Duchess [to MME. DE CÉRAN] — I can guess myself — can't you?

Bellac — Fatefully — follow me close — fatefully, it will produce the following phenomena: —

Jeanne [to PAUL] — Oh, isn't it comical !

Paul — Well, madame — ?

Bellac — Both of them, or more probably one of the two, the first, the man —

Paul [to JEANNE] — The male entity !

Bellac — Approaches her whom he believes himself to love —
[Approaches her.]

Lucy [drawing back a little] — But —

Bellac [softly detaining her] — No, no ! — You will see ! They dart their glances into each other's glances ; they mingle their sighs and their tresses —

Lucy — But, M. Bellac —

Bellac — And then ! — And then — there will pass into their Ego — independently of their Ego itself — an uninterrupted series of unconscious acts, which, by a sort of progress of slow but inescapable *processus*, will hurl them, if I dare say so, into the fatality of a foreseen catastrophe, where the will counts for nothing, the intellect for nothing, the soul for nothing !

Lucy — Allow me ! — That *processus* —

Bellac — Wait, wait ! — Suppose now another couple and another love : in place of the physiological love, the psychological love ; in place of that certain couple — two exceptions — do you follow me still ?

Lucy — Yes.

Bellac — They, too, seated near each other, approach one another.

Lucy [still edging away] — But then it's the same thing !

Bellac [still holding her back] — But wait ! there is a shade of difference. Let me show you the shade. They too may dart eyes into eyes and mingle their tresses —

Lucy — Oh, indeed ? [Rises.]

Bellac [making her sit down again] — Only ! — Only ! — It is no longer their beauty which they contemplate, it is their soul ; it is no more their voices which they hear, it is the very palpitation of their thought ! And when at last, by a *processus* entirely different though cognate, they too shall have arrived at that dim and embarrassed point where being knows itself not, a sort of delicious torpor of the will which seems to be at once the *summum* and the *terminus* of human felicity — they will wake not upon the earth, but in the midst of heaven ; for

their love soars far beyond the stormy clouds of common passions into the pure ether of sublime idealities!

[*Silence.*

Paul [to JEANNE] — He's going to kiss her!

Bellac — Lucy! dear Lucy, do you not understand me!

Oh! say that you understand me!

Lucy [*disturbed*] — But! — It seems to me the two concepts —

Paul — Huh! the concepts! Oh, aren't they too funny!

Lucy [*still disturbed*] — The two concepts — are identical!

Paul — Oh! identical —

Bellac [*passionately*] — Identical! — Oh, Lucy, you are cruel! — Identical!!! But just realize that everything here is subjective!

Paul — Subjective! Oh, I *must* do some crazy thing!

Bellac [*conquered by passion*] — Subjective! Oh, Lucy, do comprehend me!

Lucy [*conquered by emotion*] — But, Bellac! — Subjective!

Jeanne [to PAUL] — He's not going to kiss her!

Paul — Then I'm going to kiss you!

Jeanne [*defending herself*] — Paul! Paul! [*Sound of kisses.*]

Bellac and Lucy [*rising in alarm*] — Hah?

Duchess [*in astonishment, rising also*] — What? How? Are they kissing each other?

Lucy — Somebody — somebody is there!

Bellac — Come, come! take my hand!

Lucy — They've been listening to us! O Bellac, I told you so!

Bellac — Come!

Lucy — But I am horribly compromised!

[*Goes out by left rear.*

Bellac [*following her*] — I will make reparation, my dear miss, I will make reparation!

SCENE V.

JEANNE and PAUL leave their hiding place, laughing.

Paul — Oh, Platonic love! Ha, ha, ha!

Duchess [*aside*] — Raymond!

Jeanne — And the Ego, and the *processus* and the *terminus*!
Ha, ha, ha!

Duchess [*leaving her hiding-place in turn: aside*] — Ah, you rogues! Wait a little! [*Walks softly toward them.*]

Paul — Huh? the gay old Tartufe, with his double-ender declarations fitted with escapement! [*Imitating BELLAC.*]
 “But, dear miss, the concept of love is double!”

Jeanne [*imitating LUCY*] — But the principal factor —!

Paul — Now see, Lucy!

Jeanne — Now see, Bellac!

Paul — But there is a shade of difference! Let me show you the shade!

Jeanne — But then it is identical —

Paul — Identical! Oh, cruel — just realize that everything here is subjective!

Jeanne — O Bellac! subjective!

[*Sounds of kisses which the DUCHESS smacks upon her hand.*]

Paul and Jeanne [*rising in alarm*] — Hah!

Jeanne — Somebody!

Paul — Caught!

Jeanne — They’ve been listening to us.

Paul [*drawing her away*] — Come, come!

Jeanne [*as she goes*] — O Paul, perhaps in the beginning we too —

Paul — I’ll make reparation, dear angel, I’ll make reparation!
 [*They disappear on the left.*]

SCENE VI.

Duchess [*laughing*] — Ha, ha, ha! the comical things! — They are dears — but they deserve a lesson. — Ha, ha! — I can laugh — now. — Ha, ha! — Now then, Lucy. [*To MME. DE CÉRAN.*] Your daughter-in-law is getting along! What did I tell you? — Well, are you on now? Suzanne — that appointment — that letter?

Mme. de Cérán — Yes, it was that letter of Bellac to Lucy that Suzanne found!

Duchess — And that she took for a letter of Roger to Lucy. That’s why she was so furious, the jealous little thing!

Mme. de Cérán — Jealous? Duchess, you don’t mean to say she’s in love with my son?

Duchess — Huh! maybe you’ll keep on wanting to make him marry the other one? Well! and the *processus*?

Mme. de Céran — The other one? No, certainly not — but Suzanne, never, aunt, never!

Duchess — We haven't got that far yet — unluckily. Meanwhile, go and find your tragedy and your Revel candidacy again. Go on! As for me, I'll take the job of recapturing your son, and making him put up his big sword. All's well that ends well. Mph! Ah! All the same, I feel easier! Much ado about no great matter — but it's over! over! over! Let's go!

[*They start to leave from the left. Door on the right creaks.*]

Both [stopping] — Huh?

Duchess — Another! Oh, I see, your conservatory! It's Figaro's chestnut trees, your conservatory! — Oh, well, this is gay.

Mme. de Céran — But what one can this be?

Duchess — Who? [*Struck with an idea.*] Oh! [*To MME. DE CÉRAN, pushing her toward the left.*] Go back into the drawing-room, I tell you.

Mme. de Céran — Why not stay here?

Duchess [as before] — You can't leave your guests forever, can you?

Mme. de Céran [straining her eyes to see] — But really, who is it?

Duchess [as before] — So long as I'll tell you — go quick, before whoever it is — you can't any longer —

Mme. de Céran — That's true; besides, I shall come back for the tea.

Duchess — For the tea! that's it. Go on, go on! and quick, quick!

[*MME. DE CÉRAN goes out at the left.*]

SCENE VII.

Duchess — Who can it be? Either Roger watching Suzanne, or Suzanne watching Roger. [*Gazing to the right.*] Yes, yes, it's he, sure: it's my Bartholo [jealous guardian]. [*Looking to left.*] And now Miss Jealous, who thinks Roger is with Lucy, and wants to see a little of what's going on. That's it. Third sick headache. My count is straight! Ah, if Fate doesn't do something with this, she's an awkward huzzy! [*Softly lowering her eyes.*] Let's help her a little.

Suzanne [entering and hiding] — I know his walk around the conservatory has got to take him past here. I was embarrassing him.

Roger [same] — She took a walk around the conservatory ; she's in it. I saw her come in. Well, at last I shall know what conclusion to come to.

Duchess — They are playing hide-and-seek !

Suzanne [listening] — That Englishwoman seems to be late !

Roger [same] — Him ! Isn't Bellac here yet ?

Duchess — They won't end it up — not unless I take a hand. — St !

Roger — She's calling him. Oh ! if I dared take his place, as long as he isn't here. That would be a good way to find out how far they've got.

Duchess [aside] — Now then ! now then ! — St !

Roger — Hang it, that will last till it stops. As he doesn't come, I shall have learned something any way — St !

Duchess — There !

Suzanne [aside] — He takes me for Lucy. — Oh, how I'd like to know what he is going to say to her.

Roger [in a suppressed voice] — Is that you ?

Suzanne [in a suppressed voice] — Yes ! [*Aside, resolutely.*] Worse luck !

Roger [aside] — She takes me for Bellac.

Duchess — Oh, good — now ! Go on, my dears, go on ! [*Disappears behind the clumps at left rear.*]

Roger — Did you get my letter ?

Suzanne [aside, in a rage speaking into his face without his seeing or hearing her] — Yes, I did get your letter ! — Yes, I got it, and you don't much suspect it either. [*Aloud, softly.*] Why, unless I had, should I have come to your appointment !

Roger [aside] — Yours ! — Well, is it clear enough this time ? — Oh, unfortunate child ! — We shall see, at all events. [*Aloud.*] I was so afraid you might not come — dear.

Suzanne [aside] — "Dear !" — Oh ! [*Aloud.*] But you saw me leave the drawing-room immediately — dear.

Roger [aside] — They are certainly on a familiar footing ! — There's no more to say ! — But I must know absolutely — [*Aloud.*] Why do you keep so far away from me ? [*Goes toward her.*]

Suzanne [aside] — Oh, he'll see I am smaller than Lucy. [*Sits down.*] There ! like that —

Roger — Don't you want me to come and sit beside you ?

Suzanne — I should like it.

Roger [aside, going toward her] — Oh! she'd like it! — What astonishes me is that she should take me for Bellac; for I've neither his voice nor — Anyway, it will last till it stops: let's make use of it. [*Sits down near her, turning his back to her; aloud.*] How good it was of you to come! Then you do love me a little, dear?

Suzanne [also turning her back to him] — Yes, dear.

Roger [rising and walking about; aside] — She loves him! — Oh, the scoundrel!

Suzanne — What ails him?

Roger [returning to his seat beside her] — Ah — well, then, let me be near you as at other times.

Suzanne [aside, indignantly] — He takes her hand!

Roger [aside, indignantly] — She actually lets him take her hand! — It is shocking!

Suzanne [same] — Oh —!

Roger [aloud] — Are you trembling?

Suzanne — It's — it's you that are trembling —

Roger — No, no, it's you! — Are you — [*Aside.*] We shall see — worse luck! [*Aloud.*] Are you afraid?

Suzanne [aside, in a fury, rising] — You —!

Roger [aside, drawing a long breath] — They haven't got there! [*Suzanne returns, after a determined gesture, and seats herself beside him without saying a word.*]

Roger [terrified, aside] — What? — farther? — But then — [*Aloud.*] Ah! you are not afraid?

Suzanne — Afraid — with you?

Roger [aside] — "With"! — But how far has that scoundrel carried his misconduct? Oh, I'll find out — I want to know — I want — I ought — I have charge of her soul — [*Aloud, with decision.*] Well, then, come: if you are not afraid, why do you avoid me? [*Draws her toward him.*]

Suzanne [indignantly] — Oh!

Roger — Why do you turn away from me?

[*Puts his arm around her waist.*]

Suzanne [as before] — Oh!

Roger — Why do you shield your face?

[*Bends toward her.*]

Suzanne [springing to her feet] — Oh! this is too much!

Roger — Yes, it is too much!

Suzanne — Look me in the face, now! *Suzanne!* Not Lucy — *Suzanne*, do you understand?

Roger — And I am Roger! Not Bellac — Roger, do you understand?

Suzanne — Bellac?

Roger — Oh, unhappy child! So it was true? — Ah, Suzanne, Suzanne! How shameful it is! How shamefully you have treated me! — At any rate, he will come, and I will wait!

Suzanne — What? Who?

Roger — Then you don't perceive yet that I read your letter?

Suzanne — That letter! — It was I that read it — *your* letter!

Roger — My letter? — Bellac's letter!

Suzanne — Bellac's? — Yours!

Roger — MINE?

Suzanne — Yours! — To Lucy!

Roger — To Lucy? — To you! to you! to you!

Suzanne — To Lucy! to Lucy! to Lucy! — who lost it!

Roger [*stupefied*] — Lost it!

Suzanne — Ah, ha! I was there when she claimed it back from the servant! You can't say — And I found it myself!

Roger [*in sudden illumination*] — Found it!

Suzanne — Yes, I did — found it, and the appointment — and the sick headache — and everything! — I knew everything. And I wanted to see, and I came — and you took me for her —

Roger — I?

Suzanne [*her tears beginning to master her*] — Yes, you! Yes, you! — You took me for her, and you told her you loved her! — Yes! — Yes! — Then why did you tell me you didn't love her? — Yes — me — a little while ago — you told me so, and said you weren't going to marry her. — Why did you tell me so? There was no need of telling me so: Marry her if you want to, I don't care, but there was no need of telling me that! — You deceived me — you lied to me! It isn't right! If you loved her, it wasn't necessary — it wasn't necessary — [*Throwing herself into his arms.*] Ah, don't marry her! don't marry her! don't marry her!

Roger — Suzanne — Oh, my dear Suzanne! how happy I am!

Suzanne — Ah —?

Roger — So you found that letter? It wasn't to you?

Suzanne — To me?

Roger — Well! no more was it to me — I swear it to you!

Suzanne — But —

Roger — Don't I swear it to you! It was to Lucy! — to Bellac! — to the rest of them! What does it matter! Oh, I understand now! — You thought — Yes — yes — like me — I understand! Ah, dear child — dear Suzanne! — How afraid I have been — great Heavens, how afraid I have been!

Suzanne — Why, what of?

Roger — What of! Yes, that's true! — It's absurd! — No, no! don't hunt. — It's hateful! — Forgive me, do you understand? I ask your forgiveness —

Suzanne — Then you are not going to marry her?

Roger — Why, didn't I tell you —

Suzanne — Oh, I don't understand a thing about that. Just tell me you are not going to marry her, and I'll believe you —

Roger — No, indeed! — no, indeed! — What a child it is! — There, don't cry any more — wipe your eyes, dear little girl, dear Suzanne. We are not angry any more — don't cry any more.

Suzanne [*in the center*] — I can't stop myself.

Roger — Why not?

Suzanne — I haven't anybody but you, Roger. I don't want you to leave me.

Roger — Leave you?

Suzanne [*still crying*] — I am jealous, you know very well — You don't understand that yourself — no — no — Oh, I saw that well enough this evening, when I tried to make you mad about M. Bellac — You weren't looking at me all by myself — Bellac was nothing to you.

Roger — He? But I wanted to kill him!

Suzanne — Kill him! [*Throws her arms around his neck.*] Oh, how sweet you are! Then you believed —

Roger — Be still — don't let us talk any more about that — it's done with — it's forgotten, nothing ever happened! Let's begin all over again! at my arrival, at yours, a little while ago. — Good morning, Suzanne, good morning, my dear girl — how long it has been since I have seen you! Come here — come close to me — as you did just now. [*Sits down, and makes her sit beside him.*]

Suzanne — O Roger, how good you are now! How you tell me things! You love me better than you do her, then, really, truly?

Roger [gradually warming up] — Love you? Why, isn't it my duty to love you? my duty as relative, as tutor? my duty as an honest man above all? Love you! See here, when I read that letter—I don't know what went on inside me—oh! it was then I understood what serious affection—oh yes, I love you, dear little girl, dear purity, and more than I thought myself, and I want you to know it. [*Very tenderly.*] You do know it, don't you? Don't you feel that I love you ever so much—dear little Suzanne?

Suzanne [somewhat surprised] — Yes — Roger —

Roger — You look at me—I surprise you—I don't convince you—I am so little used to outbursts of tenderness, so awkward at caresses—I don't know how to say these things—I— The education of the heart is done by mothers, and you don't know mine—she has made me a dig, a learned man. Learning has filled my life. You have been its one rest, its one smile, its one youth! You have no one but me, do you say? Well! and I, my own little dear, what have I had to love but you, you alone—and I didn't realize it, no I didn't! You captured me as children do capture you, without their knowing it or your suspecting it; by the powerful expansion of their being, by the obsession of their grace, by the enticement of their weakness, by everything that makes one love it, because he yields himself up and submits himself to what he protects. I was your master, but I was your pupil too. While I shaped your soul to thought, you shaped mine to tenderness. I taught you to read—you taught me to love. It was on your little pink fingers, it was on the golden silk of your baby hair, that my ignorant heart spelled its first kisses. You came there a tiny mite—into the heart where you have grown up, and which now you fill entirely, do you comprehend? entirely. [*Silence.*] Well, are you reassured?

Suzanne [rising in a quiver, says in a low voice] — Let's go!

Roger [in surprise] — Why? Where?

Suzanne [deeply agitated] — Somewhere else.

Roger — But why?

Suzanne [same] — It's dark.

Roger — But just now —!

Suzanne — Oh, just now — I didn't see.

Roger — No, stay here—stay here! Where shall we be better off than here? I have so much yet— My heart is so full— I don't know why I tell you all this—it's true—but

it isn't right to tell you of it — O Suzanne — stay here awhile — dear Suzanne — [*Holds her back.*]

Suzanne [*trying to free herself*]. — No — no — please — you —

Roger [*in surprise*] — You? — You don't call me *thou* any more!

Suzanne [*still more agitated*] — I — please!

Roger — But just now —

Suzanne — Oh, but not now any more —

Roger — But why?

Suzanne — I don't know — I —

Roger — Well! — once more! You are crying — Have I made you feel bad?

Suzanne — No — oh, no!

Roger — Then — I have offended you without meaning it — I've —

Suzanne — No — no — I don't know — I don't understand — I'm — let's go away, please —

Roger — Suzanne — but I don't understand any more — I don't see what —

SCENE VIII.

The DUCHESS appears.

Duchess — And do you know why? It's because neither one of you sees clear. [*Turns on the gas. The scene lights up.*] There!

Roger — Aunt!

Duchess — Oh, my dear bantlings, how happy you make me! — Come, kiss your wife, you!

Roger [*stunned at first*] — My wife! — Suzanne! [*Looks at his aunt, looks at SUZANNE: then with a cry.*] Oh, it's true — I love her!

Duchess [*joyfully*] — There now! That makes one that sees clear. [*To SUZANNE.*] Well — and you?

Suzanne [*dropping her eyes*] — Oh, aunt!

Duchess — Oh, you saw it already, it seems. Women always have quicker eyes — Huh? What a fine invention gas is. — Is everything all right? — There's nobody left but your mother —

Roger — What?

Duchess — Oh dear, that will come hard. — There she is! — There's the whole of them; the whole tragedy! — Not a

word— Let me fix it— I'll take charge of that!— But what's going on out there?

SCENE IX.

MME. DE CÉLAN *enters joyfully in advance; then, one after another through all the doors, DES MILLETS surrounded by ladies, the GENERAL, BELLAC, LUCY, MME. DE LOUDAN, MME. ARRIÉGO, PAUL, and JEANNE, — all the characters of Act II.*

Mme. de Céran — Great news, aunt!

Duchess — What?

Mme. de Céran — Revel is dead!

Duchess — Are you joking?

Mme. de Céran — It's in the evening papers. Look!

[Hands her a paper.]

Duchess — Really now! *[Takes the paper and reads.]*

Mme. Arriégo *[to the poet]* — Most beautiful! Superb!

Mme. de Loudan — Most beautiful work! and so lofty!

General — Very remarkable! There's one admirable line!

Des Millets — Oh, General!

General — Yes! yes! — Most admirable line! Er — how does it go? — “Honor is now like a god who can no longer have a single altar.” Er — most admirable line!

Paul *[to JEANNE]* — Rather long!

Bellac *[to LUCY, as he holds a paper]* — He died at six.

Saint-Réault *[to his wife, as he also holds a paper]* — Yes, at six — oh, I've got M. Toulonnier's promise.

Bellac *[to LUCY]* — Toulonnier promised me solemnly —

Mme. de Céran *[to the DUCHESS]* — Toulonnier is ours entirely!

Duchess — Well, where is your Toulonnier, then?

Saint-Réault — They have just sent him a dispatch.

Mme. de Céran *[aside]* — Confirmatory! — that's all right — but why? *[Seeing him enter.]* Ah! at last!

All together — It's he! Oh! Ah!

[TOULONNIER comes down in front. They surround him.]

Mme. de Céran — My dear Secretary-General!

Saint-Réault — My dear Toulonnier!

Mme. de Céran — Well! that dispatch — ?

Bellac — It's about poor Revel, isn't it?

Toulonnier [*with embarrassment*] — About Revel, yes.

Bellac — Well, what does it say?

Duchess [*looking at TOULONNIER*] — It says he isn't dead, on my word!

Mme. de Céran, Bellac, Saint-Réault [*showing their papers*] — But the newspapers?

Duchess — They got fooled!

All — Oh!

Duchess — For once! [*To TOULONNIER.*] Didn't they?

Toulonnier [*cautiously*] — He isn't dead, that's a fact!

Saint-Réault [*dropping into a chair*] — Again!

Duchess — And they've even appointed him to something else, I'll bet!

Toulonnier — Commander of the Legion of Honor.

Saint-Réault [*springing to his feet*] — Always!

Toulonnier [*showing his telegram*] — It will be in to-morrow's *Officiel* — look! [*Mournfully, to SAINT-RÉAULT.*] I am deeply concerned —

Duchess [*aside, looking at TOULONNIER*] — He knew it when he came: he is exceedingly clever. [*Aloud.*] And I have great news of my own to announce to you, likewise.

All — Ah! [*They turn toward the DUCHESS.*]

Duchess — In fact, I have two pieces of it.

Lucy — Indeed?

Mme. de Loudan — Two? What are they, Duchess?

Bellac — What ones?

Duchess — First, the marriage of our friend Miss Lucy Watson to Professor Bellac.

All — To Bellac? What?

Bellac [*low*] — Duchess!

Duchess — Ah! reparation must be made!

Bellac — Rep— Oh, but with delight! Ah, Lucy!

Lucy [*in astonishment*] — Pardon me, madame —

Duchess [*low*] — Oh, reparation must be made, child!

Lucy [*same*] — There can be no reparation here: there is no offense, madame, and you are wrong in saying "must."

Bellac — How is that?

Lucy — My feelings are in accord with my will.

[*Gives BELLAC her hand.*]

Bellac — Oh, Lucy!

Duchess — Come, so much the better! No. 1!

Mme. de Loudan — Ah, Lucy! you are happy among all women!

Duchess — Second piece of news!

Mme. de Loudan — Another marriage!

Duchess — Another one, yes!

Mme. de Loudan — Why, this is the feast of Hymen!

Duchess — The marriage of my dear nephew, Roger de Céran —

Mme. de Céran — Duchess!

Duchess — To a girl I love with all my heart —

Mme. de Céran — Aunt!

Duchess — My sole legatee!

Mme. de Céran — Your —

Duchess — The heir of my property and my name! My adopted daughter, in a word, — Mlle. Suzanne de Villiers de Réville.

Suzanne [*throwing herself into her arms*] — Oh, mother!

Mme. de Céran — But, Duchess —!

Duchess — Find one of a richer and better family, then.

Mme. de Céran — I don't say that. But still — [*To ROGER.*] Consider, Roger.

Roger — I love her, mother!

Duchess — No. 2! [*Looking about her searchingly.*] I still have on hand — [*To PAUL.*] Ah! come here a minute, you. How are you going to make reparation, eh?

Paul [*abashed*] — Ah, Duchess, was it you?

Jeanne [*in confusion*] — Oh, madame, you heard —?

Duchess — Yes, little masquerader, yes, I heard.

Paul — Oh!

Duchess — But as you two didn't say anything very bad about me, I'll forgive you. And you shall be a prefect, there!

Paul — Oh, Duchess! [*Kisses her hand.*]

Jeanne — Oh, madame! Gratitude, as St. Evremond says —

Paul [*to JEANNE*] — Oh, there's no need to bother about that any more now!

THE MAN IN BLACK.

By JOSÉ ECHEGARAY.

Played for the first time in the Teatro Español, Madrid, April 22, 1898.

(Translated for this work by Ellen Watson.)

[JOSÉ ECHEGARAY, the one great recent Spanish dramatist, was born at Madrid in 1832, but spent his early years and received his education in Murcia. His specialty was mathematics and his profession civil engineer; after practical study in several provinces, he was made mathematical professor in the School of Engineers, and published scientific works, but was interested also in political economy. In the revolutionary government of 1868 he was cabinet minister and Director of Public Works; and Minister of Finance in 1872-1873, under Amadeus, resigning on the proclamation of the republic. He then went to Paris and wrote a one-act play, "The Check-Book," represented anonymously in Madrid two years later, the author having meantime become cabinet minister again. This was followed at short intervals by four others, "The Avenger's Bride," "The Last Night," "In the Hilt of the Sword," "How it Begins and How it Ends," which made no special mark. But "Madman or Saint" (1877) was universally recognized as showing that the middle-aged politician, mathematician, and engineer had become the greatest dramatic force in Spain. He has written many others since, the most famous being the historical drama, "The Great Galeoto," accounted in Spain as ranking him next to Shakespeare, but hardly feasible to introduce him to an English audience; among others are "What Cannot Be Told," "A Shoreless Sea," "In the Bosom of Death," "Conflict between Two Duties," "A Merry Life and a Sad Death," "The Sublime in the Commonplace,"—mostly ethical tragedies, with motives and characters often hardly intelligible except to a Spaniard, but with emotional and ethical situations of immense power, if shrouded in gloom. The one here given is one of his latest and most characteristic: it is singular that the artist-hero is the precise counterpart of Barrie's "Sentimental Tommy," and his final self-analyses might almost have been taken bodily from the book or its sequel. The occasional quaintness of the stage directions are the author's own, and left undisturbed. It may be mentioned that Echegaray has also written comedies of merit, "The Embryo Critic" being ranked first of these.]

 PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

ELEANOR.
 ARNOLD.
 FÁBIAN.
 ALBERT.

JACINTH.
 TRINIDAD.
 PAULINA.
 CAMILLA.

LEONARDO.

ACT I.

A luxuriously furnished reception-room. Daytime.

SCENE I.

Fabian — It is Leonardo's voice. What can have happened to him? [*Goes to rear of stage.*]

Jacinth — I don't know. He doesn't sound happy!

[*Follows FABIAN.*]

Fabian — It does not take much to over excite him, poor fellow! I believe he's bound to lose his mind, some day.

Jacinth — And they say he's a great artist, a genius! It makes me laugh!

Fabian — A genius! the idea! Any eccentric artist passes for a genius, nowadays. And what does his work amount to, after all? Has the fellow performed any miracles yet?

Jacinth — That's just what I say! What is his wonderful work? He merely chisels out of a block of marble these statues that are more or less beautiful. It's astonishing, *Fabian*!

Fabian [*returns to rear of stage*] — He's at it again, wrangling like mad! These geniuses have no regard for others. And on Eleanor's birthday, too. She is receiving, and the parlor is full of people; the conservatory, too, full of ladies and all her young girl friends.

Jacinth — And gentlemen as well, gentlemen of good family, like yourself, *Fabian*!

Fabian — Thank you, *Jacinth*! But in spite of all this, Leonardo is crying out as if he were at a bull-fight! He is impossible!

Jacinth — He is so used to handling his marble and his chisel that he treats human beings as if they were of stone, too, and hammers away on us!

Fabian — And Arnold cannot endure him.

Jacinth — Well, for that matter, Arnold is another odd type. He makes me laugh, too!

Fabian — He seems to be a man of good standing in society.

Jacinth — He is a sinister, mysterious being. "The man in black," I call him!

Fabian — Well, this "man in black," as you call him, has great influence with Eleanor. Whoever wishes to find welcome in this house must keep on the right side of Arnold.

Jacinth — And Leonardo makes himself very much at home here. No doubt some day he will be lord and master of the house, and of its mistress too. But how he does hate Arnold ! It makes me laugh, when they begin their discussions !

Fabian — Leonardo is an exception : at all events Arnold was Eleanor's guardian, when she was left an orphan. She looks up to him as if he were her own father, and her confidence in him is absolute.

Jacinth — Oh, of course no one can doubt that he is an honorable and serious man.

Fabian — And besides that, he is deeply religious.

Jacinth — No one doubts that either.

Fabian — He has managed Eleanor's immense fortune with the utmost integrity. She must be worth some four millions !

Jacinth — What ! A fortune for a prince or a princess.

[*He sighs.*]

Fabian — Ah, ha ! That does not make you laugh, eh, *Jacinth* ?

Jacinth — Not at all ! It makes me sigh with envy !

Fabian — Yes [*smiling*], Arnold has administered Eleanor's affairs with the same interest he would devote to his own — that is to say, Arnold's very own !

Jacinth — Ah, ha ! now you make me laugh again !

[*Laughs maliciously.*]

Fabian [*at rear*] — But do you hear ? There he is, at it again !

SCENE II.

LEONARDO enters, at rear, greatly excited.

Leonardo — No, no ! we must come in here. There is no other way !

Jacinth — But what's the matter with you ? Some great crisis ? Has the Parthenon been destroyed, or have you and Eleanor come to blows ?

Fabian — What were all those cries we heard ?

Leonardo — What's the matter, indeed ! Everything's the matter ! Everybody has conspired to torture me ! That is, they are striving to destroy my illusions, and for a man of my temperament that is the greatest possible torture.

Jacinth — Something serious, then ?

Leonardo — I should say so ! Is not this Eleanor's birthday ?

Fabian — To be sure.

Leonardo — And I, in secret, in most perfect secrecy, have prepared a surprise for her. Such a surprise!

Jacinth — A birthday present?

Leonardo — A present! How prosaic you are, Jacinth! Listen to me [*with an air of greatest mystery*]. From a block of purest marble, without a flaw, without a shadow of stain, — an ideally perfect marble — I have chiseled Eleanor's divine form! Never before have I been so inspired with my work. Never before has my chisel wrought such true lines in the unyielding stone! Never, never have I come so near to actual truth and beauty! It is her very self. The execution perhaps is not so perfect, but the very soul is there! No, never mind what they say, that marble contains a soul! For once in my life I have attained my desire, my ideal!

Fabian — Those who ought to know about such things say you have great talent.

Leonardo — Oh, I am a mere nobody! My work amounts to nothing! Probably I shall never rise above mediocrity; — but for all that, Eleanor is there, in the marble. [*His tone is half tragic, half comic.*] And Eleanor's bust is there, in the corridor! And there it must wait until a good-for-nothing, worthless, treacherous door is opened! Oh, this locked door, this accursed door!

Fabian — But how is this? I don't understand.

Jacinth — No more do I! Listen to this! A divine bust of heavenly pure marble standing out in the cold of a prosaic, every-day corridor! Here's a pretty state of things! It makes me laugh!

Leonardo — Yes, do laugh! Laugh, as you are sure to do at everything, for now you have a reason for it!

Fabian — How so?

Leonardo — It's all simple enough. Eleanor knows nothing about her present, of course.

Jacinth — As I understand it, that's where the surprise comes in!

Leonardo — Of course. So Louis and I dragged in the bust without a word to any one, and got it safely as far as the door to Eleanor's apartments. My plan was simply this: to enter without being seen, and place the bust in the center of her favorite room. Then I meant to half draw the curtains and close the shutters of the balcony so that the light should be perfect, neither

too strong nor too dull. One direct ray was to light up the forehead, the hair, and the eyes; while the background was to be left somewhat dark. In short, everything was most carefully planned out. Then you see, I leave it there, and Eleanor comes in: "Ah, what is this?" she cries, "a bust, of me? It is I, myself! Leonardo must have made it!" Her eyes fill with tears, and I—I am great, immortal! No longer Leonardo de Monforte, but Leonardo da Vinci! The Raphael, the Michel Angelo of sculpture! And, moreover, I am happier than the elect of the elect, those who are nearest the throne of God! [*With ever increasing exaltation.*] •

Fabian—And at this rate, where are you going to stop?

Jacinth—Oh, no, not *going*, since you remember he's left in the corridor!

Leonardo—So—you have said it! With your sharp tongue and with malice aforethought, as usual you have hit the mark! In the corridor! That is the prosaic, wretched, mocking truth!

Jacinth—And my dear Leonardo, you must see what will happen. Eleanor comes out to bid good-bye to some friend, stumbles against the block of marble, and says crossly: "Why, what is this? they seem to be leaving odd bits of furniture round in the passageway!"

Leonardo [*very serious and much troubled*]—True! That is just what's sure to happen!

Jacinth—Then she will turn to her servants and say: "Have it taken out of the way at once!"

Leonardo [*repeats*]—"Taken out of the way at once!"

Jacinth—"How careless, to leave such bulky things in the corridor!" And then she will walk by with her friends down the passageway, and the divine bust is left standing! And our illusions, our hopes, our love, are left there, out in the cold, blocking the way! [*He laughs.*]

Fabian—Such is life, my dear Leonardo!

Leonardo—Such is life, to be sure! But I am not resigned to it. I shall struggle, and—I shall conquer.

Jacinth—But for this once you must acknowledge you are conquered.

Leonardo—Not at all! A strong will may work wonders.

Jacinth—But Arnold can do more, as it seems. He has locked all the doors of Eleanor's apartments, that you may not profane them!

Leonardo—You are right! It must be he has done this.

Jacinth — “The man in black !”

Leonardo — If I were only a painter, I would put Arnold in a mortar and grind him to powder!

Fabian — What for?

Leonardo — To paint in my blackest backgrounds, in pictures that were full of shadows!

Jacinth — Now you may just as well confess you are afraid of him.

Fabian — And that he inspires you with respect.

Leonardo — Me? Watch, and you shall see.

[*Goes to side door and knocks.*

Jacinth — He does not answer.

Leonardo — If he is there, he is bound to answer.

[*Knocks again.*

SCENE III.

ARNOLD *appears in the doorway, and remains standing there, blocking the entrance. He is dressed in black, and is somewhat ministerial in appearance.*

Arnold — You called!

Leonardo — I did.

Arnold — And why?

Leonardo — Because I desire to enter.

Arnold — These are Eleanor's apartments.

Leonardo — And that is why I desire to enter **them**.

Arnold — But no one is allowed to enter here.

Leonardo — You seem to be there!

Arnold — It is my prerogative.

Leonardo — And mine, too!

Arnold — Not yet.

Leonardo — Let us not discuss this point.

Arnold — I have no desire to. [*Would close door.*

Leonardo — But do not fasten the door.

Arnold — And why not, pray?

Leonardo — Because I object to it.

Arnold — You?

Leonardo — Yes, I! [*A pause, during which they look at each other fixedly.*] Come, Arnold, let us have done with this! I must go in there.

Arnold — For what purpose?

Leonardo — It is easy enough to tell you, but I do not recognize your right to ask me.

Arnold — But I have the right!

Leonardo — Then keep it! — and stand aside! And in any case, if you care to go in with me, you can put an end to your doubts.

Arnold — I am not in the least curious.

Leonardo — Don't drive me into doing something I shall be sorry for! [*Advances toward ARNOLD with great violence, but still with self-control.*]

Arnold — To use force?

Leonardo [*coldly*] — No, not that, but — begging you most respectfully to allow me to pass. [*Looks at him as he advances, in such a way that ARNOLD steps to one side.*]

Arnold [*watching him as he enters*] — Very well!

Jacinth — A good subject for a picture: "Darkness forbidding Light to enter!"

Fabian — No, no! Say rather: "Prudence forbidding Folly to enter!"

SCENE IV.

Fabian — Well, Arnold, Leonardo's a bit weak in his mind, is he not?

Arnold [*bowing*] — Like all the rest of us — or almost all.

Jacinth — But he surely more than any one else — the privilege of his artistic temperament.

Arnold — He is more violent than the majority, it is true. But at heart we find everywhere the same passions, the same wretchedness, the same blindness! And where shall we seek for a remedy? If you will allow me — [*Exit slowly at rear.*]

SCENE V.

Jacinth — Now he will go and tell Eleanor what has happened.

Fabian — And Eleanor will say that Leonardo is right about it.

Jacinth — Of course she will.

Albert [*enters hastily*] — Ah, good day, Fabian! how do you do, Jacinth? [*They shake hands.*]

Jacinth — You look excited. What's up?

Albert — You may well say so ! I am all but in for two affairs !

Fabian — With whom, with whom ?

Albert — With Alcaraz and Poveda. How they went, for Leonardo !

Fabian — But they are great friends of his !

Albert — Perhaps that's why they pitch into him so ! According to them he's a fool without talent, his marriage with Eleanor is a disgraceful speculation, he's an adventurer, and more of the same sort. I was ready to slap them in the face !

Jacinth — I don't agree to all this, of course, but as for his being crazy, Fabian says he is, and Arnold, too. And as to the marriage, it's not a disgraceful speculation, no — but still, it's plainly a speculation.

Albert — What ! you, too ! I tell you Leonardo has a great talent and a noble heart. As to the speculation, you must know that in his own right he has more than five thousand dollars for his yearly income, and his art brings him in fifteen or twenty thousand every year. So he is neither a beggar, a swindler, nor an adventurer !

Jacinth — Very true ! But for all that, between Leonardo's somewhat doubtful twenty thousand and Eleanor's perfectly certain six millions, there is a margin for speculation !

Fabian — Really, friends, this sort of discussion is shocking !

Jacinth — I would like to know what Arnold thinks.

Albert — Arnold is a sworn enemy of Leonardo's, and what is more, he is a hypocrite of the first water.

Fabian — Little by little you are taking Leonardo's part, and I am going to stand up for Arnold. He is an honorable, upright man, severe and devoted to his church, a man whose equal it would be difficult to find. He does not approve of Eleanor's marriage with Leonardo because he would have Eleanor lead a spiritual life, and Leonardo lives such a sensuous, worldly one. She is a true Christian and an angel of light, and he a pagan artist ! Arnold longs to see her a sister of charity, and not a sculptor's model. He would strive to save her soul —

Jacinth — And her millions, at the same time, eh ? Fabian, you will make me die of laughing ! In some great final burst of laughter I shall breathe my last ! So our friend Arnold is an anchorite, a missionary, a mystic, a — transcendentalist, is he ? Well, then, let me tell you what he really is. I won't say he is not a man of honor, I grant you that, but stupid

rather than honorable. He dresses in black because it is so much simpler than to wear colors, and adheres to his plain ways to save the trouble of being elegant. He says little because he has few ideas, and he is religious because his fathers were before him. He opposes Eleanor's marriage because he is as jealous as a cat. In short, he is an insignificant fellow, well fitted to be King-at-arms, a royal usher, or to play some such foolish rôle.

Albert — No, no! You are wrong there. He is a most dangerous man, and you have not understood his true character. He is a man of violent, uncontrolled passions, and in his fiftieth year, the dangerous period for vigorous natures such as his. Thro' the torrid zone he is passing to the frozen poles of old age, but oh! this crossing the equator! Let me tell you [*mysteriously*], with all his years, his homeliness, his severe aspect, he is in love with Eleanor! Yes, I tell you, madly in love with her.

Fabian — Angels and ministers of grace, defend us! You're madder than Leonardo himself.

Jacinth — My dear fellow, you're as mad as a hatter! The love-affairs of the "man in black"! the last thing out!

Albert — Oh, yes! you may laugh if you like.

Fabian — Oh, what a lover! A lover that is constantly taking Eleanor to visit the poor, to dry their tears, exposing her to all manner of contagious diseases! He, in love! Truly, an ideal lover!

Jacinth [*to FABIAN*] — It's blind ignorance if nothing worse, to drag this beautiful and sensitive girl almost every day thro' workhouses and hospitals, exposing her to every kind of fatal disease.

Fabian — Is it better to take her, as Leonardo does, to listen to immoral plays and sensuous music, or to visit museums whose glory is the nude in art, a mere mockery of modesty?

Jacinth — And what if one of these days our poor Eleanor should take some infectious disease?

Fabian — Arnold goes with her, and is equally exposed to all danger of that kind.

Jacinth — Much harm would it do if he did!

Albert — Ah, how blind you are! Can you not see thro' the cruel conduct of this jealous wretch? Do you not see that the villain is exploiting Eleanor's exquisite sensitiveness? that he is attempting to separate this saintly girl from all earthly

passion? And if Eleanor should die as the result of one of these charitable visits, Arnold would feel it greatly, for he loves her. Yet I believe he would rather see her in her grave than at the altar!

Fabian — Better stop there, Albert.

Albert — And why not say what was on my mind to say?

Jacinth — After all, we none of us know what Arnold really is.

Fabian — A saint!

Jacinth — A fool!

Albert — A jealous lover!

Jacinth — Well, we're just where we were before!

Fabian — We shall see when we get to the end.

Albert — Here comes Leonardo.

SCENE VI.

LEONARDO *enters.*

Leonardo [*to himself, not noticing the others*] — Well, it's all right now, and I've placed it just as I wanted to. But what will Eleanor say! The background ought to be darker.

Albert — Well, Leonardo!

Leonardo — Ah, you here! Thanks, I — [*Shakes hands absent-mindedly.*]

Jacinth — Did you find the right place, and a good light for the bust?

Leonardo — Pretty fair — I did what I could. [*He is still buried in thought.*]

Albert — A bust?

Jacinth — Yes, of Eleanor — a surprise. He has just placed it in the room of his beloved, like the statue of a goddess in her temple.

Leonardo — Yes, like the statue of a goddess! And what of Arnold?

Fabian — He went away very much vexed with you.

Jacinth — Perhaps to tell Eleanor all about everything.

Leonardo — What more is there to tell? But I am sorry not to have met him!

Fabian — To give him satisfaction?

Leonardo — Or to offer him an insult.

Albert — I vote for the insult.

Fabian — You treat him but with slight respect!

Leonardo — Did he commission you to say so to me?

Fabian — No, he did not.

Leonardo — In that case you will excuse my not answering.
What are you talking about, Albert?

Albert — Something that interests you.

Leonardo — Me? Only two things in this world are of interest to me, — my father and Eleanor. And then a few friends — very few.

Albert — Then I can tell you at once a great deal that will interest you.

Leonardo — Your telling them is sure to interest me.

Albert — Listen then, Leonardo. [*Would take him to one side.*]

Leonardo [*to ALBERT*] — Wait, I believe Arnold is coming, and it would be a great favor to me if you would leave me alone with him. [*Aloud.*] Why will you not all go in and see Eleanor's bust? — not at all because it is my work, but for the sake of her whom it represents. And I hope you will tell me your opinion frankly.

Jacinth — With the greatest pleasure! [*To the others.*]
Come, shall we go in?

Albert — Of course we will! A bust of Eleanor, and by you? Let's go to see it at once, and admire it.

Fabian — This way then, please!

ARNOLD appears in doorway, at rear, and stops there.

Leonardo — Thank you! Go in, go in! I am not so strict as Arnold is, and would let every one in! Especially when I want to be left alone!

SCENE VII.

Leonardo — Arnold, would you kindly come nearer, and have a talk with me?

Arnold — Certainly.

Leonardo — I am frank and loyal, and hope you will be so with me.

Arnold — I am so with everybody.

Leonardo — All the better! In that case you will probably find that this is no occasion for getting — over-excited.

Arnold — I never allow myself to become over-excited!

Leonardo — I do then, and very often !

Arnold — A bad mistake ! But you were going to say — ?

Leonardo — Yes, I will begin without preamble. You are opposed to my marriage with Eleanor, and show it in the most determined manner. You gain nothing by this, and yet you are doing your very worst.

Arnold — Certainly I am.

Leonardo — You confess it then ? [*Restraining his fury.*

Arnold — Why not ?

Leonardo — I do not — no, this frankness is just what I want. And why do you oppose our love in this way ?

Arnold — Because it seems to me disastrous.

Leonardo — For whom ?

Arnold — For her. Your father did not leave you in my charge as Eleanor's father left her, and so I am not responsible for you as I am for her.

Leonardo — Can you think for a moment that I would not — that is, that I shall not — make her happy ?

Arnold — Exactly, you would not make her happy.

Leonardo — Am I not a man of honor ?

Arnold — Possibly — as honor is understood in your class of society.

Leonardo [*violently*] — Good Heavens !

Arnold — I do not doubt you are, according to that code.

Leonardo — Enough ! Do I not love Eleanor with all my heart, and with all my soul ?

Arnold — With all your heart, — yes, as hearts go, perhaps you do. But with all your soul, as souls love — no !

Leonardo — You would presume to read my soul, perhaps ? Listen ! [*A pause.*] A soul is not what you imagine it to be — a convenient mask for pretended severity and sanctity. If a soul exist, it must feel, aspire, and love. And so I swear to you that I love Eleanor with my whole soul, with all that within me is capable of feeling, of aspiration, and of love !

Arnold — These are but words —

Leonardo — Perhaps I do not make my meaning clear, but at all events I speak with perfect sincerity.

Arnold — We are never so deceived as by our own selves.

Leonardo — But what do you take me to be ?

Arnold — An artist — a man who is in love with beauty — and what you love in Eleanor is her beauty. You love this woman as you might love a beautiful picture or a divine statue,

if they should come to life. It is a love inspired by your eyes, which revel in light and color; by your ears, which absorb sweet harmonies; by your touch, anticipating all manner of soft delights. In short, a love of the senses, nothing more nor less.

Leonardo [*restraining himself*] — Arnold, you lie!

Arnold — If you think you can provoke me, you are merely wasting your time.

Leonardo [*barely concealing his contempt*] — I know it!

Arnold — Then we have done.

Leonardo — No, Arnold, I would have you know that I am ready to give my life for Eleanor.

Arnold — Yes, suddenly, in some great emergency, in a moment of delirium, you might. But slowly, hour by hour, day by day, year in, year out, I doubt it, Leonardo! [*Laughs harshly.*]

Leonardo — A little more, and you'll succeed in making me lose my temper!

Arnold — Ah? I thought it already was partially so!

Leonardo — Arnold! no more of this! I feel a wave of hot blood rushing to my brain!

Arnold — To your studio, then! — quick, your marble, your chisel! These are your moments of inspiration!

[*Would go, but LEONARDO detains him.*]

Leonardo — So then, it is to be war to the knife between us?

Arnold — No.

Leonardo — Still, you mean to do your utmost to persuade Eleanor to give me up?

Arnold — Yes.

Leonardo — It is a struggle for life or death between us two, then?

Arnold — It is a struggle in which I fight on the Lord's side.

Leonardo — Enough! But listen to this. You may deny me every virtue, but you can hardly deny that I have a most determined will.

Arnold — Yes, yes, you are obstinate enough. A strong will is one thing, and obstinacy is quite another!

Leonardo — You may call it what you please, but you must learn to know me before we begin our struggle. [*A pause.*] I used to be weak, and I made up my mind I would make myself strong. I *am* strong! I used to be awkward, and I

determined to learn the use of all the different weapons—and now I use them all with skill. An obscure artist, and an idle one at that, I resolved to win a name for myself—and I have won name and fame! I was nineteen years old when I saw this woman for the first time. I saw her, and she took immediate possession of my soul—this soul which you would deny me! She was driving swiftly by in a carriage, and was passing out of sight;—I might have lost her forever, but I felt I must not, nor did I. Do you know what followed? As I could not enter the carriage by force I threw myself in front of the horses, so that they might trample me under their feet. I fell, covered with blood—the driver pulled up, and recognized me. Thro' her and for her I desired to win fame, and won it. I strove to win her love, and it is mine. I have dreamed of making her my wife, and she shall marry me! Obstacles? I shall conquer them all, destroy them, annihilate them. For life or death! You are forewarned!

Arnold — I am, indeed!

Leonardo — Two words more. As it is the only talk we need have together, it does not matter if it is a little long.

Arnold — It does not tire me.

Leonardo — I am more than weary with it all, but here again my strong will comes in play—to conquer my fatigue. Kindly listen to what I have to tell you. A friend of mine, almost a brother to me, fell in love with Eleanor. I broke off all connection with him, and would have fought a duel with him, but he would not consent. You see that even friendship does not hold me back! They say in Madrid that my marriage with Eleanor is a shameful speculation. My fortune is modest, and she is very rich, I know, and appearances are against me. My honor is at stake, but you see that even dishonor is unable to hinder me. My father I love with all my soul—do you hear?—with all my soul, and in this case even you cannot deny me a soul! My father is opposed to the marriage, but though he should beg me with tears in his eyes, and with threats of his everlasting displeasure to give Eleanor up, I would not consent! My life—yes, I would gladly give him my life, but my love—no, not my love. And so you see my father himself is powerless to prevent me. Now you may infer how much importance I am likely to place on what you think and on what you say!

Arnold — You have done?

Leonardo — I have.

Arnold — Then I will say no more.

Leonardo — Your coolness irritates me beyond words ! Eleanor loves me, and her heart is mine. Do you not feel your own weakness in this battle? On what do you depend?

Arnold — On God ! But you will not understand that. I will put it in other words. I pin my faith on what you call fate, — destiny, — chance, or — what not !

Leonardo — Enough ! till later.

Arnold — Till later, then.

Leonardo — We will end our talk here, if you please.

Arnold — It suits me perfectly.

Leonardo — Your servant, sir !

Arnold — And I yours — in so far as it is consistent with my duty.

SCENE VIII.

Albert [*enters, full of enthusiasm*] — Admirable ! divine !

Leonardo — So you like it?

Albert — Like it? Why, man, it is Eleanor herself ! This marble is Eleanor ! In it she is alive, she breathes, and smiles ! A very miracle !

Leonardo — Really ? really ?

Arnold [*apart*] — Poor fool !

Leonardo — And the others ? What do they say ?

Albert — They were all — somewhat against their wills, to tell the truth — filled with astonishment and admiration !

Leonardo — They, too !

Albert — That's the greatest triumph ! But now Eleanor must come. She must see it herself. Shall I call her ?

Leonardo — Yes.

Albert — Then I will go and get her and all her friends.

Leonardo — But do not tell her what it is. Be careful, won't you ? Say a surprise, and nothing more.

Albert — You think me so stupid as to tell !

Leonardo — Oh, I know you're not, — but do go, — go at once.

Albert — You will see how she will stand before it, lost in deep admiration ! — how she will cry out with delight !

[*Goes out eagerly.*]

Leonardo — May God grant it !

SCENE IX.

ARNOLD *seated in large arm-chair, cold and impassive as if of stone.* LEONARDO *at some distance from him.*

Leonardo — How my heart beats! Whatever Albert may say, the unhappy bust can hardly give Eleanor any real pleasure. She will say it does, for the sake of not hurting my feelings, but my work does not satisfy me. Something is surely lacking! At first I deceived myself — but now I know it is but marble, a bit of marble, that resembles Eleanor, but is not Eleanor's own self. What a fool I have been! And how dull my chisel is! I am but a vain, ignorant fellow, after all! If there were time I would remove it. [*Perceives ARNOLD.*] Ah! still that evil shadow, determined to destroy all my illusions! He is probably thinking over his plan of campaign — preparing for the battle. What will his schemes be? He said he was counting on chance, on fate, or something of the sort. [*Pauses and approaches him apprehensively.*] Arnold?

Arnold — Ah, it is you again?

Leonardo — Why, why did you say you depended upon chance?

Arnold — Did I?

Leonardo — Yes.

Arnold — I do not know.

Leonardo [*aside, moving away from him*] — He is deceiving me, I know. There was some real reason for it. Ah! here is Eleanor!

SCENE X.

At the rear are heard confused sounds of animated talking and laughter. Enter ELEANOR, TRINIDAD, PAULINA, CAMILLA, and ALBERT. ELEANOR is a splendid vision of beauty, elegantly dressed; the other ladies, young, beautiful, and exquisite in their freshness, form a brilliant union of light, color, joy, and youthful beauty.

Trinidad [*to ALBERT*] — But why will you not tell us what surprise you are preparing for us?

Paulina — Do not torment us so.

Camilla — Pray tell us, Albert!

Eleanor — No, no, do not tell us! If you do, there'll be no surprise left.

Leonardo — Eleanor!

Eleanor — Leonardo! [*They shake hands, and LEONARDO bows to the other ladies.*]

Camilla — But you have had a share in the surprise, Leonardo.

Eleanor — One has only to look in his face to see that he has!

Paulina — But do talk about it! Tell us something about it!

Albert — I cannot say a word. They have forbidden me!

Eleanor — And you, Leonardo?

Leonardo — I cannot!

Eleanor — How pale you are!

Paulina — And how excited!

Trinidad [*to ARNOLD*] — And are you in this surprise?

Arnold — No, madame. [*Rises, bows, and goes to rear of stage.*]

Trinidad — Look, Arnold is offended!

Eleanor [*to LEONARDO*] — Really, there is nothing the matter? You are not vexed?

Leonardo — I, vexed with you?

Eleanor — Come, let's have done with it. Where is this wonderful surprise?

Albert —

“She who loves me,
Let her follow me!”

[*Turns to right: all draw back, joking and laughing.*]

Paulina [*laughing*] — Just listen to this piece of presumption! “She who loves” him, indeed!

Camilla — See, you are left alone! No one loves you!

Albert — Well, that is a surprise to me!

Eleanor — But where are you going to?

Albert — To your apartments, which Leonardo has taken by assault, treading Arnold under foot on his way to victory!

Eleanor — What does all this mean?

Albert — Inside there is the mystery, and the surprise, and the —

Leonardo — Silence!

Albert — And now:

“She who loves mystery
Has but to follow me.”

Eleanor — So say we all of us! [*All together cry, “All of us, all of us.”*] ALBERT enters the room and after him press eagerly TRINIDAD, CAMILLA, and PAULINA. ELEANOR is last, and

stops as she sees LEONARDO is not following her.] And you, Leonardo? Aren't you coming?

Leonardo — I cannot!

Eleanor — But, it is your surprise!

Leonardo — Go in, Eleanor dear, you first of all.

Eleanor [*in doorway, about to enter*] — A mystery.

Leonardo — Oh! worthy of Paradise!

Eleanor — I will enter, then!

SCENE XI.

Leonardo [*listens at door*] — They must be looking at it now. I hear no sound. But what can this mean? Are they coming back already? [*FABIAN and JACINTH come from room.*] Ah! it is you.

Fabian — We retired in favor of the ladies.

Leonardo — And have they seen the bust yet?

Jacinth — As we came out they were just going in.

Fabian — It's a wonderful likeness, no doubt about it!

Jacinth — Somewhat idealized.

Fabian — In fact, it's a most beautiful work of art — a real masterpiece!

Jacinth [*shakes hands with LEONARDO*] — My best congratulations, Leonardo!

Fabian — And mine, too. [*Shakes hands.*] You have done works of greater boldness of execution, perhaps, but this has real merit — it is charming!

Leonardo — Nothing that I have done has cost me so much thought and hard work.

Jacinth — Do you feel sure the eyes are quite alike?

Leonardo [*somewhat alarmed*] — I don't know!

Fabian — I did not notice that, but I did think that perhaps a few more strokes of the chisel would improve the hair — give it more the feeling of life — of motion!

Leonardo — Possibly.

Fabian — In every way it is a most remarkable bust. I repeat my congratulations.

Jacinth — Your hand trembled a bit — do not deny it! It is nothing more than natural. In every way it is an exquisite work of art. We will go and tell them all in the reception-room. The doors must be opened in spite of Arnold!

Fabian — Until later then, Leonardo.

Jacinth [*aside to FABIAN, as they go out*] — Frankly, Fabian, what do you think of it?

Fabian [*aside to JACINTH*] — It's not bad, not at all bad. Still, it's not equal to some of his other work, not worthy of his reputation.

Jacinth — I believe myself that the bust and his reputation — are just about on a par!

SCENE XII.

Leonardo — They are not satisfied with it, and perhaps they are right about it. But if Eleanor is not pleased — Ah, here she comes! Now I shall know at last! Eleanor!

Eleanor — Leonardo! [*They greet each other as the actors may think best. ELEANOR is deeply moved.*] How beautiful it is!

Leonardo — Really? You think it is beautiful, then? You think it is a good likeness?

Eleanor — It is my very self! But as you see me, with the eyes of love, as you imagine me, Leonardo, the Eleanor of your innermost soul! Oh, how happy it makes me! How I love to think that you imagine I am as lovely as that, although I know I am not. No, no, I am not the one to undeceive you! [*Lovingly and with a bit of coquetry.*]

Leonardo — You would never succeed! That is the only thing in which you could possibly fail with me! Eleanor, you are beautiful, divine! — a thousand times more beautiful than this bit of marble wrought with these clumsy hands! Your eyes shine, and they say — oh, so many things! — but these are blind! When you smile with those dear lips of yours I feel as if heaven itself were caressing me; but the lips of the statue — when all is said and done, they are but marble. Your hair is so soft and so light! If I come near you, it stirs with my breath, while that I cut with the chisel was so stiff, so solid, so heavy! Forgive me, Eleanor, it was a profanation!

Eleanor [*gazes at him passionately*] — Oh, Leonardo! Do you really feel these lovely things you say?

Leonardo — You can doubt me?

Eleanor — I doubt you? Never! But I am only a poor weak woman, you know, dear, and I do so love to hear you say these sweet things! Your life is so much broader, living as you do for art, for fame, for immortality! While I — my one

art is to make you love me, my greatest glory is your love. I long for no other immortality than that which God may grant me at your side. [*Tenderly.*]

Leonardo — But to me, too, all this fame and applause are as nothing! My only desire is for your love — and having your love I am happy, proud, immortal, here or under the earth or in heaven — wherever you may be, dear Eleanor!

Eleanor [*listens with joy*] — Whatever Arnold may say, it is very dear, this great love of ours.

Leonardo — And what does the fellow say?

Eleanor — Arnold? Oh, I don't know. He is very saintly, and says things that any saint might. You do not love him, but you will some day. You must listen to his advice, for it is always very wise and good.

Leonardo — Never! You should not heed what he advises: he will advise you not to love me!

Eleanor — That is true! [*Smiling mischievously.*] But never mind! The poor man is trying to make a saint of me, and what harm is there in that? I, a saint! No, I shall never be that; but the better I grow under Arnold's influence the more content my God will be with me — [*with look of dreamy mysticism*] and the greater happiness He will bestow upon me; and — as there is only one thing I really long for He will make you love me more and more. And He is all-powerful.

Leonardo — Eleanor, Arnold has great influence over you!

Eleanor [*almost whispering*] — You have greater!

Leonardo — He will devote himself to convincing you that I do not love you.

Eleanor — To be sure our saint is not very clever in that respect. In love affairs we do not need his advice!

Leonardo — He will try to prove to you that I love you only for your beauty!

Eleanor — Poor man! Yes, he has told me that. And perhaps I am not sure that you would love me just the same, even if I were downright ugly?

Leonardo — Look here, Eleanor, — it fills me with a great joy to feel that you are so fond of me, — and still, I fear that man! Do you know what they call him? "The man in black!"

Eleanor — What a child you are! I am perfectly easy about it in my own mind. And what could he do to harm us?

Leonardo — Nothing, while I am here — but —

Eleanor [*sadly*] — Are you going to leave me?

Leonardo — For a few days. You know I told you —

Eleanor — At last your father has summoned you?

Leonardo — Yes, dear. I did not dare tell you.

Eleanor — The days will be full of tears, but it is your duty to go.

Leonardo — You know why he wants me?

Eleanor [*filled with anguish*] — Yes, I know! It is to convince you that you ought to give me up!

Leonardo — But he will never succeed in convincing me. You feel sure of that, love?

Eleanor [*gazing at him with wide-opened eyes*] — Never, in any way?

Leonardo — Never! No human power can separate me from you, not even my father.

Eleanor — Do you swear it?

Leonardo — To him and to you!

Eleanor — This promise made, you must do the duty that lies before you — you must go when you are called.

Leonardo — To-night —

Eleanor [*embracing him*] — Oh, so suddenly! But never mind — go to-night, love!

Leonardo — Dear Eleanor —

Eleanor — I shall count the minutes with my tears, until you come back.

Leonardo — No, no, it will redden your dear eyelids.

[*ARNOLD appears in rear.*]

Eleanor — And will you love them less when they are swollen and red?

Leonardo — Ah, cruel girl, how can you ask such a question? [*He sees ARNOLD.*] I see, it is only natural for you to say such things in this man's presence!

Eleanor — Do not let it vex you!

SCENE XIII.

ARNOLD enters.

Eleanor — Do come this way.

Arnold [*drawing near*] — At your service.

Eleanor — If you two really wish to do me a pleasure you will become good friends.

Arnold — I am no man's enemy.

Leonardo — And if I have enemies, it is not because I seek them !

Eleanor — Well then, I think if one of you has no enemies, and the other seeks none, we may all dwell in peace together.

Arnold — In peace, — and may God grant it in His great mercy.

Leonardo — With your permission, Eleanor, I will go and make my farewells to the ladies.

Eleanor — But before you go —

Leonardo — I will come back to say good-bye to you.

[*Bows to ARNOLD, and goes out at right.*]

SCENE XIV.

Eleanor — I think Leonardo is quite justified in mistrusting you.

Arnold — How so?

Eleanor — Because you do not do him justice.

Arnold — I have already told you many times, and a moment ago I told Leonardo also, that for me life is a very serious matter, and I desire that it should be so for you too. For Leonardo life is merely a sort of comedy, in which he plays a rôle without responsibility. Deceiving even himself, he is constantly feigning emotions which he does not really feel.

Eleanor — I have such respect for you, and am so indebted to you, Arnold ! You have been like a second father to me. Still, I cannot allow that in my presence you should offend the man who is so soon to become my master — who is so already, indeed. I love him, I respect him, I have faith in him, — and you will kindly refrain from talking about him to me. [*With energy.*]

Arnold — I did but answer your questions.

Eleanor — Pardon me, Arnold, but it pains me so that two persons who hold such high places in my heart should be so unjust to one another ! That is, you are so unjust to him ! He, poor fellow, never speaks except to defend himself.

Arnold [*with a certain violence and vexation in his manner*] — And you think he is in the right?

Eleanor — Yes, I always speak the truth.

Arnold — You really believe that he is in the right? Well, I will wait, hoping that the future will prove me to be so !

Eleanor — Again !

Arnold [*with bitter despair*] — To-day he is stronger than I !
I will wait ! [*Turns to rear.*]

Eleanor [*follows him*] — You love me so much, and your affection exaggerates things ! You would like my husband to be — who knows what ? An angel, a saint, the highest perfection ! But the world and men are not made that way ! And think what concessions I make for your sake ? Leonardo is very good, very noble, very generous, and I love him much better than if he were an angel, a saint, or one of those pieces of perfection of which you dream ! There may be these ideal marriages of divine beings, in heaven perhaps ! But on earth, they are like my marriage with Leonardo !

Arnold — How sad you make me ! How your wings cling to the soil of this earth, Eleanor ! You must not complain if, when you would fly upward, the clay clings to the feathers !

Eleanor — I shall not complain !

Arnold — Nor will you have a right to ! You are no longer what you once were. When hours of bitterness come, ask not for God's justice. Ask for His mercy !

Eleanor — Have I done wrong, then ?

Arnold — To avoid doing good is to do wrong.

Eleanor — Would you have me shut myself up in a convent ? If I felt a vocation, it would be the right thing to do ; but loving Leonardo as I do, it would be treason to him, cruelty to myself, and to God ! — a falsehood !

Arnold — I have never demanded of you impossible perfections. I know you are good — but deplorably weak !

Eleanor [*meaningly*] — You would be glad perhaps if I were weaker !

Arnold — Eleanor !

Eleanor — You say what you think, and so will I. Would you rather have me play a part ?

Arnold — No, no ! Show me your heart, for I must learn to know it.

Eleanor — You know it well !

Arnold — No ! until to-day I have never known it entirely.

[*Falls into chair by table, and hides his face in his hands.*]

Eleanor — Come, Arnold, do not be angry, and do not let this sadden you. You should take into consideration that I have not your firmness. I will do all that you may require of me, aside from what concerns my love for Leonardo. And I

will try not to be selfish. You can always count upon me for help in your charities. Have I ever turned with disgust from aiding the poor, the sick, or those who suffer? Has fear ever frightened me away from danger of contagion? No; in those cases one should trust in God, and in Him I have put my faith! [*A pause. ARNOLD looks at her in thoughtful silence.*]

Arnold [*in milder tone*] — Yes, Eleanor, you are right — I asked too much. After all, you are but a child, and I who am older and wiser should be more prudent. Rome was not built in one day, and the road to perfection is a long one. It cannot be helped! But have no fear. In the future I will say not a word to trouble you. Farewell, Eleanor! —

Eleanor [*humbly*] — I fear you are angry with me.

Arnold — No, I assure you.

Eleanor [*coaxingly*] — Then do not go!

Arnold — I must.

Eleanor [*holding him back*] — Oh, do stay!

Arnold — Really, I must go.

Eleanor — Why, where are you going?

Arnold [*smiling*] — Where? where? I, too, have my duties.

Eleanor — And you do not tell me what they are.

Arnold — Why should I not?

Eleanor — Well, tell me, then.

Arnold — You remember that sister of charity, Maria de los Dolores?

Eleanor — Yes, the one who took care of me with such devotion, three years ago, when I was at the point of death.

Arnold — The poor woman is very unhappy, and I am going to visit her.

Eleanor — Won't you wait a little, and when all the callers have gone we will go together.

Arnold — No, Eleanor, you cannot go.

Eleanor — Why, am I not worthy to go with you?

Arnold — No, not that, but because the poor sister's illness is something terrible — contagious. You cannot go. I could not take you there.

Eleanor — It would not be for the first time!

Arnold — No, but it would be cruel of me. You are so fond of life, and — your beauty! No, Eleanor, I could not consent.

Eleanor — If this is a punishment, it is a very cruel one!

Arnold — For Heaven's sake, Eleanor! Leonardo is coming. Silence!

Eleanor — But you will take me with you?

Arnold — No, I cannot. [*He stands apart from ELEANOR.*]

SCENE XV.

Enter LEONARDO.

Leonardo — Eleanor! [*In low tone.*] This man is still here! [*Goes up and takes her hand.*]

Eleanor — You are going then? [*In low tone.*] You are going, dear?

Leonardo — Yes, I must be off. [*In low tone.*] Yes, my love, my life!

Eleanor — So soon? [*In low tone.*] Must you go so soon, dear? [*ARNOLD watches them.*]

Leonardo — I must. This very night I leave for Granada. [*In low tone.*] Heart of my heart!

Eleanor — But you will come back soon? [*In low tone.*] You will come back to me soon, love?

Leonardo — At once. [*In low tone.*] So quickly that I believe I will not go, after all!

Eleanor [*to LEONARDO*] — But you must, your father expects you.

Leonardo — And Arnold? —

Eleanor — Have no fear. He is convinced that we are right.

[*He turns away from ELEANOR to left. She follows him with her eyes. ARNOLD watches their farewell words, some said aloud in politely indifferent tones, and others in low whispers full of passion. The method of bringing out this contrast, their exchange of meaning glances, etc., is left to the discretion of the actors. At this moment all the others come in and surround ELEANOR, who hardly notices them, so absorbed is she in watching LEONARDO. The group forms a background full of splendor, light, youth, and beauty, in the center of which ELEANOR stands out clearly.*]

Camilla — It is divine, I tell you! What beauty!

Paulina — A real miracle! It is Eleanor herself!

Trinidad — It is as fair as the fair original, Eleanor!

Arnold [*aside*] — Earthly beauty, that must some day turn to dust!

Eleanor — Farewell, Leonardo! [*She starts to go to him.*]

Leonardo — Good-bye, Eleanor! —

ACT II.

The stage-setting remains unchanged.

SCENE I.

Present: JACINTH, CAMILLA, a Servant.

Jacinth — So the travelers have not arrived yet?

Servant — No, sir. And some ladies and two gentlemen have already been here to ask for them.

Jacinth — More ladies than gentlemen, eh?

Servant — Yes, sir.

Jacinth — Naturally! [*Laughing.*] Just what I told you, sister dear!

Camilla — They have probably gone to the station, brother dear. [*Meaningly.*] They are more impatient than we.

Jacinth [*to the Servant*] — Well, as they will be here soon, we will wait.

Servant — Yes, sir.

Jacinth — You heard what he said, — more ladies than gentlemen?

Camilla — But you'd better believe me, men are every bit as curious as women!

Jacinth — Not a bit of it! You have not left me a moment's peace all this morning, with your "Jacinth, how late it's getting! Jacinth, Eleanor must have arrived by this time! Oh, how I long to see her, Jacinth!" Oh, I know you all! I know you too, little sister mine!

Camilla — Why, this impatience to see poor Eleanor only shows one thing, — that we women are more feeling, more tender-hearted than you men. I am just wild to see her, to hug her and eat her up with kisses!

Jacinth [*ironically*] — Oh, this tenderness you women feel for each other would melt the heart out of a stone! Oh, mysterious depths of a woman's heart!

Camilla — What do you mean by all this?

Jacinth — That because Eleanor has been away for more than three months her girl friends are dying to welcome her back: nothing more than that! Why should I think other-

wise? But tell me this: if your dear little friend interests you so much as all that, why did you not go to see her, not even once, in the two long months her terrible illness lasted?

Camilla — How should I know? We sent every day to ask how she was getting on.

Jacinth — But you did not go yourself.

Camilla — I had no one to go with me.

Jacinth — No, that's not the real reason. Shall I tell you what it is?

Camilla — Say what you please.

Jacinth — Listen, and confess. Eleanor went with Arnold to see Maria de los Dolores.

Camilla — Yes, I know.

Jacinth — The unhappy woman was dying, and finally died of — smallpox — the most terrible malady of all, which puts an end to life, or to beauty, leaving its loathsome seal on its victim's face.

Camilla — Stop, stop, for mercy's sake! You make me shudder!

Jacinth — And Eleanor's soft, rosy skin was ruined by this terrible sign manual!

Camilla — Poor little thing!

Jacinth — And therefore you come with such eagerness, with such concern, with such love. [*He whispers.*]

Camilla — To see if she is fully restored.

Jacinth — And at the same time — for after all, life is prose — to see if she is greatly disfigured! [*Still in a low tone.*]

Camilla — For heaven's sake, be silent, you wretch!

Jacinth — Well, then I will, — as I have had my say!

SCENE II.

Enter PAULINA.

Paulina [*speaking to Servant*] — Very well, very well then, I will wait. Dear Camilla! [*Kisses her.*] Good day, Jacinth.

Camilla — I thought you would come.

Jacinth — And I too.

Paulina — I am so wild to see Eleanor, poor little dear! How she must have suffered! How many kisses I have for her! But — Camilla, do you think we can kiss her without danger?

Camilla — Why, yes.

Jacinth — It is four months now.

Paulina — The fact is, I am so afraid of it! You see, Camilla, if it were a question of charity, now —

Jacinth — In case of need you would risk your life, but not your pretty face!

Paulina — Come now, I am no hypocrite. I say just what I feel. The very thought of this malady fills me with horror and fright! Every one has but the face God has given him, and I should hate to have mine made hideous before my time.

Jacinth — Brava! This frankness is worth a good deal!

Paulina [to CAMILLA] — Don't you think so, too?

Camilla — I hate to think of such things!

Paulina [very curious] — And what news have you of Eleanor? How has it left her? Is she beautiful still?

Camilla — I do not know. No one has seen her. She has lived very quietly in Seville.

Paulina — But I am just dying to see how her face looks.

Jacinth — Paulina, you are a rare girl, and if at any time you break off with Paquito, just let me know, for I like you awfully for your goodness, your sweetness, and your frankness!

Paulina — Thank you, Jacinth! I do not know how to make believe!

Camilla — Has your mother come?

Paulina — She is not quite well, but it's nothing serious — her nerves again! I disposed of my teacher, and here I am, waiting for Eleanor to come. My dear, how dreadful it will be, if she has lost her beauty!

Camilla — Yes, it would be terrible!

Jacinth — A tragedy for her, and a comedy for the others!

Paulina — Not for all! For Leonardo it will be a tragedy!

Camilla — And where is Leonardo? Do you know?

Jacinth — Leonardo went to Granada, because his father summoned him. You know he is opposed to the marriage, and so he wrote for him to come. According to all accounts there were terrible scenes. The poor old man has a fiery temper, and Leonardo is his father's own son. So the result of all the trouble was that the good old gentleman had an attack of vertigo. Of course Leonardo could not leave him. It was during this time, while Eleanor was near dying, that Arnold took advantage of her weakness to cut the telegraph wires! He really put an end, or nearly so, to all communication! At last Leonardo learned through Albert that Eleanor is to come

to-day, and he will come to-day too. You may look forward to two moments full of emotion !

Camilla — That is, when Eleanor arrives.

Paulina — And again, when Leonardo comes, and then, when they meet ! How exciting !

SCENE III.

TRINIDAD and FABIAN enter at rear.

Trinidad [to Servant] — You need not announce us.

Paulina — My dear !

Trinidad — Camilla ! So you did not go to the station, after all ? Good day, Jacinth ! [They shake hands.]

Camilla — No, dear, I thought I'd better wait for them here.

[FABIAN greets the Ladies.]

Fabian — At your service, ladies ! — good day, Jacinth.

Camilla [to TRINIDAD] — But you went down to the station ?

Trinidad — Indeed I did. And there I met Fabian, who was so kind as to accompany me.

Fabian — Which was a great honor and most especial delight, believe me !

Camilla — So you saw Eleanor and Arnold arrive ?

Trinidad — Yes, we saw them.

Paulina — But why are they not here ? I do not understand this at all !

Camilla — Where are they, that they do not show themselves ?

Jacinth — Don't keep us waiting like this. [They all surround TRINIDAD, full of interest and curiosity, and she smiles with the air of one who knows all about it.]

Trinidad — Patience, my children ! Be very calm and very patient, and I will explain everything !

Paulina — Do pray begin, then ! [They draw closer.]

Trinidad — Well, my dears, you must know that our sweet Eleanor has looked death in the face ! And that gives one ideas about duty, and the like, you understand ? Religious feeling that has lain dormant comes to life again, and Eleanor, before coming home, has gone with Arnold to fulfill a sacred duty, paying a visit of thanks to her favorite Virgin, the Virgin of Sorrows.

Jacinth — At all events, they will be here soon now ?

Trinidad — Directly.

Paulina [*curiously*] — Come, tell us —

Camilla — You saw her?

Trinidad — Did I not tell you so?

Paulina — And how is she?

Trinidad — Well rested, did you not think so, Fabian?

Fabian — Yes, quite recovered, and in good spirits.

Paulina — I don't mean that.

Trinidad — What do you mean, dear?

Paulina — We want to know how Eleanor's face looks. — Now I have said it!

Trinidad — Her face? She is pale, very pale.

Paulina — One may be pale and still very beautiful. How tantalizing you are! Tell us, is she still beautiful or not? Has her illness destroyed her beauty, or is she still the divine Eleanor we all know, whose marvelous bust is in her room here?

Trinidad — Alas, that I must tell you! Such a terrible sorrow! My dears, I wept like a Magdalen! And you will weep too when you see her!

Camilla — She is so changed, then?

Paulina — Poor dear, poor little Eleanor!

Fabian — Camilla, Paulina, you must realize this truth. Beauty is but skin deep, and there's an end to it all!

Paulina — On the contrary, Fabian, that is why it is so valued! Because it is so rare and frail, and so easily ruined!

Camilla [*eagerly*] — But tell us more, go on!

Trinidad — I have told you everything!

Jacinth — In a word, — a short, sad word and one that is very hard to believe, — our Eleanor is — homely!

Camilla — But tell us more in detail, my dear, not all in one word!

Paulina — Yes, is her color —?

Trinidad — That lovely cream and rose complexion is faded, and in its place an ashen gray —

Paulina — How horrible!

Camilla — And what more?

Paulina — That perfect profile?

Trinidad — That has gone too. Her profile is so sharp now, and her cheek-bones stand out! Oh, it is sad to see her.

Paulina — How distressing! To think of Eleanor thin and wretched!

Camilla — Gracious heavens! It is awful to think of!

Jacinth — Trinidad, you're positively funereal.

Paulina — And her eyes? Do her eyes shine as they used to?

Trinidad — No, they are faded, too. At times they glow with their old fire, and then they shine again, but that is even worse, for their light shows up all the ravages that the disease has made in that fair face. They are but fiery suns, shining on a desert of sand!

Jacinth — So poor Eleanor looks like an old woman, does she?

Trinidad — It is even worse than that! Old age keeps a certain beauty, whereas one can still see clearly that Eleanor is young.

Paulina — And — her hair? Has she lost her hair?

Trinidad — No, her hair is just as it always was, and that is painful, too, because the glorious setting makes such a contrast to the faded, lifeless face.

Paulina — And tell me, her figure —

Trinidad — It has lost its charming elegance, and is bowed down with her sufferings!

Jacinth — A complete wreck, then?

Fabian — Yes, complete, you may take my word for it. I did not recognize her when I saw her getting out of the train. Actually, I did not know her! I'm not a man to be easily affected by these things, but really I was very much moved! Very much moved!

Paulina — You felt like crying? Ah, the poor girl!

Fabian — Paulina!

Camilla — Silence, some one is coming! [*Goes to rear.*]

Trinidad — It must be she!

Jacinth — Is it Eleanor?

Fabian — No, it is Albert.

Paulina — How late it is!

SCENE IV.

ALBERT *enters.*

Albert — He has not come yet. That's good, — a calm before the storm! Good day, ladies.

[*He shakes hands with them all.*]

Paulina — Good day, Albert.

Albert — Fabian, Jacinth, some of you have been to the station. Did you see Eleanor?

Paulina — Yes, Trinidad saw her.

Jacinth — And Fabian.

Albert — And how is she?

Trinidad — She is quite recovered.

Albert — That's the main thing. And Arnold?

Paulina — Yes, to be sure! How is Arnold?

Trinidad — The same as ever!

Albert — Always the same black shadow!

Trinidad — Now I have told you all I know,—your turn next, Albert.

Albert — My turn?

Paulina — Of course, it's your turn to tell us the news. What else did we come for?

Albert — But what news are you after?—of what things or what persons?

Paulina — Why, of Leonardo, to be sure. Has he arrived yet? When is he coming here? and—[*PAULINA speaks always with levity; her manner is always somewhat frivolous, ingenuous, and sympathetic.*]

Albert — Well, to begin with, he has arrived.

[*They all surround ALBERT, full of curiosity.*]

Paulina — Then he will be here by and by.

Albert — Yes, he will be here later on.

Paulina — But tell us more! Tell us everything you know about Leonardo, everything!

Jacinth — From the time when he learned that Eleanor was seriously ill.

Albert — When he heard of that he could not leave his father, who was dangerously weak. I wrote him as reassuringly as possible, and concealed the real nature of the disease, calling it a persistent fever, with typhoid symptoms—nothing dangerous. Finally I wrote him that Eleanor was getting better, and going to Seville or to the country, to complete her cure.

Paulina — I suppose Eleanor wrote him as often as she could?

Albert — I suppose so, yes, but I'm not sure of this. When I wrote him they were coming to-day he took the train, and an hour and a half ago I gave him a warm welcome at the station—a warm, hearty welcome, such as you will soon give our dear Eleanor here.

Paulina — But why is he not here?

Albert — He came here as soon as he arrived, not stopping even to refresh himself after the journey. But the servants told us Eleanor had not arrived; then we went to the station, where we learned they had come and gone away again! Then when we got back here, they told us Arnold had taken Eleanor to the church. Oh, how mad Leonardo was!

Fabian — Why so? There was no reason for it.

Albert — No reason, I grant you, but he was furiously angry for all that!

Fabian — I believe you!

Paulina — Of course he was impatient!

Albert — Then he wanted to go and look up Eleanor, but I knew the first time he met Arnold there was sure to be a row, and I would not let him.

Fabian — But why this feeling of antagonism towards so worthy a man?

Albert — Because I hold him responsible for Eleanor's illness.

Paulina — And you are right! — a thousand times right! It is malice aforethought to take such a beautiful girl to visit a smallpox patient!

Trinidad — No, no, dear. Nothing more than carelessness.

Albert — And Leonardo believes firmly that it was an infamous, horrible plot on Arnold's part: an attempted murder, nothing more nor less!

Fabian — Good heavens! The man is crazier than ever!

Paulina — Listen, is not that a carriage?

Camilla — Yes, it has stopped at this door.

[*Looks out on street.*]

Jacinth — Yes, it is Eleanor herself! Now all hands ready to give her a warm welcome!

Paulina — At last we are going to hold her in our arms again!

Fabian — Now, do be careful! Not too much emotion!

Albert — You are quite right, Fabian. The poor girl must be quite weak still.

SCENE V.

ELEANOR and ARNOLD enter. ELEANOR, as TRINIDAD has described her, weak, pale, emaciated, her face showing traces of the smallpox, her beauty and gayety gone. In short, she

shows a pitiful lack of beauty, but is in no wise a caricature. Dressed as a nun of the Carmelite order, or of that of our Lady of Sorrows, whichever is considered most artistic, she makes a striking figure, framed in the doorway.

Eleanor — At last! at last! At home once more! Heavenly Father, I thank thee! [*She stretches forth her arms, or expresses the deepest emotion in whatever way the actress may think best.*] Ah! you are all here! How good of you to come! [*She greets her friends, who all press around her.*]

Paulina [*embraces her*] — Dear, dear little Eleanor!

Camilla — My own sweet Eleanor!

[*Embraces her, vying with PAULINA.*]

Trinidad — And where do I come in? Do I not count? Give me a kiss, too.

Eleanor — Oh, let me kiss you all! How good you are! How often I have thought of you! Oh, how I love you, love you! It seems like a dream, a resurrection! I could not believe — I thought I should never see you again!

[*She is deeply moved and weeps, while her friends all make much of her.*]

Arnold — Come, Eleanor, you know all this emotion is bad for you. Allow me, ladies. — Now you must sit down quietly, and then to rest.

Trinidad — Arnold is quite right.

Paulina — Are you well, dear?

Eleanor — Yes, yes, but — yes, very strong. It is all over now. I am myself again.

[*They make her sit down.*]

Camilla — The same old Eleanor!

Eleanor — Now let me see you all! [*Looking at the men.*] My faithful friends! Fabian, Jacinth! [*They come up and shake hands with her.*] Albert? Yes, Albert, and no one else? [*Evidently looking for LEONARDO.*] I have spoken to you all? There is no one else? [*Sadly.*]

Fabian — You have greeted us all, Eleanor dear.

Eleanor — There is no one hidden?

[*She looks round in every direction.*]

Jacinth — No one.

[*A pause. ELEANOR continues her search sadly and passively.*]

Albert [*aside*] — Poor little girl! She is looking for Leonardo!

[*They watch her curiously.*]

Trinidad — Well, dear, you must be very tired. We all longed to welcome you, and now we ought to be going.

Eleanor — Not at all! Are you tired of me so soon! I cannot allow it. You must all of you stay to lunch with me.

Fabian — Oh, Eleanor!

Jacinth — Why, how could we, Eleanor!

Eleanor — No resistance, please! Be silent, and obey orders! I am so happy with you all! so strong, so full of courage! It seems as if everything else had been a bad dream! And my looks are improved, too, are they not?

Paulina — Yes, dear, your face is, — your face is all right, you know.

Trinidad — You are much better, oh, so much better!

Eleanor — Yes, I know, but let me look, let me look. [*Rises and goes toward mirror.*]

Paulina — Where are you going to?

Eleanor — To look at myself — to see for myself. I don't want you to deceive me. Ah! [*She steps back, and covers her face with her hands.*] No, no, I am not all right yet. I do not remember how I used to look, but I am not the old Eleanor!

Camilla — A little pale, perhaps, but that only makes you the more interesting.

Arnold — Come, this is worse than foolish!

Eleanor — Well, I will not talk any longer. Do go on laughing and jesting together as you always used to. You are staring at me so, as if you found something strange in me! Am I so changed? Do I shock you so? But it is so little! A trifle paler, a trifle thinner, a trifle weaker, and that's all. In a week I shall be myself again. Come, do not look at me so! You frighten me. Give me your arm, Albert, and take me for a little turn about the room. [*Through all this speech her manner is nervous and agitated. She takes ALBERT'S arm and walks about, while the others stand in groups and talk together, but without losing sight of her.*]

Albert — With pleasure, Eleanor.

Eleanor — And where is Leonardo?

Albert — He knows you have come.

Eleanor — And when is he coming, when? Tell me the truth now.

Albert — Presently.

Eleanor — Presently! — and what does that mean? Next month, next week, to-morrow, to-day? Do not torment me so!

Albert — But are you strong enough to bear a great joy?

Eleanor — Then he will come to-day ?

Albert — But do not faint !

Eleanor — Please go on ! [*She seizes his arm.*]

Albert — Ah, what strength ! Well, then, he has come home, and will be here within ten minutes.

Eleanor — Merciful heavens ! [*They all come to her side.*]

Paulina — What is the matter ?

Camilla — Are you ill ?

Arnold — Eleanor !

Eleanor — Leave me ! leave me, all of you. Why should I be ill ? Let us go on, let us go on with our walk. [*She moves away from them energetically, half gay and half vexed, and clings to ALBERT.*] In ten minutes ! But it is a shame to receive him in this costume ! However, there is nothing to be done about it — it is a promise. Leonardo is sure to be shocked, thinking I am very ill. [*Smiling.*] And so I want to ask you, — tell me the truth, please, — how do I strike you ? Will Leonardo be very much shocked when he sees me, do you think ?

Albert — And do you suppose that Leonardo is going to mind about that sort of thing ?

Eleanor [*thoughtfully*] — Leonardo is an artist. He loves beauty and hates what is ugly. He cannot help it !

Albert — But, Eleanor, I swear to you by all that is holy that Leonardo loves you with his whole soul.

Eleanor — Arnold says no, he does not. Albert [*in low voice*], I almost hate Arnold ! It may be just one of my sick fancies, but I do not want to think of him ! I will think of no one but Leonardo. How I long to see him ! But now, I do not know why I am so afraid ! Is it because you all of you stare at me so eagerly ? Am I so very much changed, then ? Please do not deceive me ! As I see myself every day I cannot tell how much I have changed.

Albert — Why, Eleanor, what put such fancies into your head ?

Eleanor [*looks at him sharply*] — Ah ! you are not frank with me ! But I shall find out yet. Come with me.

Albert [*laughing*] — Where are you going to take me ?

Eleanor — To see my bust — the one that Leonardo made. It is in here, and I want to ask it what it thinks of me. It will not hide the truth ! It is marble, and does not suffer ! It is marble, and will not lie ! It is marble, and will say to

me: "In me you behold your former self!" We will stand face to face, both of us reflected in the mirror, and then I can compare. Come, come quickly. [*Leads him off with her, and then suddenly changes her idea.*] No, stay here, and I will go alone—alone. I will stand face to face with the marble portrait, and then I shall learn what it can teach me. And then?—What more?—My face must brave its marble counterpart, and—when all is said and done, they are left to gaze on each other for all eternity! [*Enters room.*]

SCENE VI.

All surround ALBERT.

Arnold—What is the matter with her?

Paulina—What was she saying?

Camilla—Is she ill?

Albert—I told her Leonardo might come at any moment, and then—

Arnold—And is he coming?

Albert—He is.

Arnold—Indeed!

Eleanor [*is heard from inner room*—Oh! My God!

Paulina—A cry!

Camilla—It is Eleanor!

Trinidad—We will go and see what has happened.

Albert—Yes, do, for heaven's sake! [*Much alarmed.*] Do you know why she went? She wanted to look at the bust.

Jacinth—Good heavens!

Albert—Here she comes.

SCENE VII.

ELEANOR enters sadly, convinced that she has lost all her beauty, a picture of utter dejection.

Eleanor [*in a low tone to ALBERT*—It has told me the truth! I know all now! [*She passes slowly by them and throws herself down on the sofa.*] Arnold, tell me, the soul may still preserve its beauty, though the face be ugly, may it not? Speak to me, tell me all these things that used to comfort me! Well, dear girls, I must just give up everything! No, no, not you—you are as lovely as ever! [*Caressing them and endeavoring to*

look happy.] Ah! I am surrounded by beauties! A choir of Angels! [ARNOLD comes up too, and takes her hand.

Fabian [*aside to JACINTH*] — It seems to me that she is anything but resigned!

Jacinth — And she will be still less so when she sees Leonardo, and — he sees her!

Trinidad — I think you really ought to rest now.

Eleanor — Yes, you are right. But I cannot bear to have you go! No, let us lunch together. But you may leave me alone for a half hour — that is quite enough. And now off with you, to the garden, to the conservatory, to my apartments, wherever you choose!

Paulina — We will do as you say.

Eleanor — And you, gentlemen, will bear the ladies company.

Fabian — With the greatest pleasure! You have but to say the word!

Albert — Poor dear! [*Exeunt in groups, leaving ARNOLD.*

SCENE VIII.

Eleanor [*seeing ARNOLD*] — You must go too.

Arnold — Are you annoyed? Are you angry with me?

Eleanor — I? Why so? On the contrary, I am deeply grateful to you. Who ever had a better nurse!

Arnold — Why should I go, then?

Eleanor — I must be alone. [*Harshly.*] Leonardo will be here soon, and I desire to be alone.

Arnold — So you still —?

Eleanor — Always! —

Arnold — Until the moment of disenchantment comes!

Eleanor — What moment of disenchantment?

Arnold — What you foresee already!

Eleanor — If it comes, I will turn to you for help.

Arnold — Then — I shall expect you!

Eleanor — Yes, but now — [*Exit ARNOLD slowly.*

SCENE IX.

Eleanor — He will be here soon! How I have longed for this moment, and yet — how I dread it! He is so kind-hearted

that he is sure to hide his real feelings, but I shall guess them! This room is so full of light, and I am so afraid of light, now! I must make it a little darker. But within, I am unchanged — the same love, the same tenderness, the same heart! It is foolish to let these thoughts haunt me so, but what cowards we all are! Ah, some one is coming. It must be he. [*Pause: she rises and takes a few steps, then leans against the wall, a chair, the door, wherever seems best.*] Yes, it is he! [*Remains standing, shrinking timidly back into dark corner.*]

Leonardo — At last! They told me she was in this room, but I do not see any one. [*Looks round.*] Eleanor, my own Eleanor! I am really going to see her again, after all these months! Ah! [*He sees her.*] Excuse me, madame, but they told me I should find Eleanor here. [*Aside.*] Who can this be? If you will allow me — [*Goes toward ELEANOR'S room.*] [*Aside.*] How strange of this woman! She does not say a word! [*He is standing with his back toward her.*]

Eleanor [*her voice choked with tears*] — *Leonardo*!

Leonardo [*turns swiftly*] — Who calls me?

Eleanor — *Leonardo*! [*She bursts out crying and hides her face in her hands.*]

Leonardo [*going nearer to her*] — This voice! Who are you? Is it you, my love?

Eleanor — Oh, *Leonardo*! [*She opens her arms wide.*]

Leonardo — *Eleanor*! [*She falls weeping in his arms, and he presses her passionately to his heart.*] My love! My life!

Eleanor — At last, thank God, at last! It has all seemed a horrid dream!

Leonardo — At last, yes! After many days I hold you again close to my heart!

Eleanor — I thought I should never, never see you again!

Leonardo — And I have not seen you yet! [*Attempts to see her face, but she hides it against his breast.*]

Eleanor [*half laughing and half crying, fondly*] — No, no, do not look at me! You will think me so ugly you will not love me any more!

Leonardo — You, ugly! Ah, let me see! — I want to see you.

Eleanor — I have changed very much. I have grown so wretched looking! You will not know me. Really, you did not recognize me, you know.

Leonardo — But the room was almost dark! Now you will

see. Now [*he rushes to open the balcony shutters*] you will see if I know you!

Eleanor — Oh, don't do that! That is too much light!

Leonardo — For you, perhaps, but not for me. Let me have light, the full light of day! I have been blinded for too long. [*He takes her handkerchief away from her face and looks straight at her.*] *Eleanor!* *Eleanor!* [*He utters these two cries after having seen her, the first full of wild passion, the second of surprise and grief.*] My own dear little Eleanor, how you must have suffered! [*Embraces her again: she hides her face.*]

Eleanor — Yes, I have suffered terribly. I feared I should lose you! I have not recovered my strength yet.

Leonardo — Come, come with me, poor little dear, here close by my side, never to leave me again.

Eleanor — Never again? You really mean it?

Leonardo — Never, soul of my soul! [*From this point on he is very loving, but his words are mere repetitions of what she says, without spontaneity.*]

Eleanor — And you can love me just as you always have?

Leonardo — Even more, even more!

Eleanor — We must make up now for all we have had to suffer, by loving each other even better than before.

Leonardo — Yes, dearest, we must surely make up for lost time.

Eleanor — I wrote to you as often as I could, you know.

Leonardo — And what a comfort your first letter was to me! All of them were, of course, but especially the first. And I answered at once.

Eleanor — How kind, to be sure! Do you expect to be praised for answering my letters?

Leonardo [*carelessly*] — Still doubting my love! At least you've not changed in that respect.

Eleanor — Then I have changed in some way? Tell me how.

Leonardo — In no way! You are as good as ever, as loving as ever! An angel, Eleanor dear!

Eleanor — And nothing more? Kind, loving, angelic, and nothing more? [*Laughs bitterly.*] Not beautiful?

Leonardo — For me you are always divine! There are many kinds of beauty, of loveliness.

Eleanor — And what more? Go on!

Leonardo — And what if I do not know what to say,—

if I find no words, — my joy is so overwhelming! [*All this scene, as we have already said, is somewhat forced.* LEONARDO, in spite of his efforts, cannot bring himself to speak freely.]

Eleanor [*in low tone*] — In old times you always had dear things to say to me — but now, Leonardo, you do not love me any more — oh, I can tell! I feel you love me no longer! [*Almost in tears.*]

Leonardo — I! You can think that I love you less! [*More and more angry with himself.*] If I were capable of loving you less, I should despise myself, hate myself, loathe myself! So Arnold was right, then. To hold you in my arms, and not feel every fiber quiver with delight! If you believe I love you less, call Arnold, call him, and bid him turn me from your house! [*He is well-nigh desperate, feeling vaguely that his love has grown weaker, and indignant with himself: all this with the greatest sincerity.*]

Eleanor — Do you see? do you see? Now I am no longer afraid to look at you! Look at me now, — I am your own Eleanor. This heart that beats for you now is the same heart that has ever beat for you. The voice that tells you I love you is the voice that has told you so so many times. Does it not sound the same?

Leonardo — The very same! Your voice is unchanged!

Eleanor — And my heart! You would not forget my heart!

Leonardo — Your heart, too, is faithful.

Eleanor — And my eyes — no, my eyes no longer shine as they did once. And yet they see you still, unchanged. They cannot be very different, can they, if they see you just the same? [*Tenderly and lovingly.*]

Leonardo — Yes, you are still beautiful, still my own dear Eleanor. [*Speaks without conviction.*] And after all, what does beauty matter!

Eleanor — You used to consider it all-important.

Leonardo — There is a beauty that comes with suffering too. And you have suffered so much. But for heaven's sake, Eleanor, don't let's talk of this any longer, — it is belittling our great love. You are what you are, and as you are I love you. What does it matter if the outer form be fair or ugly? Within is the soul that I adore! Let your inner light shine, for that is what my soul worships.

Eleanor — If you really feel all that you say, I am a happy, happy woman! — even happier than before!

Leonardo — If I feel it? You doubt me again, and your doubt makes me despair! I do not wonder at it, though! It is all Arnold's work. I know him, I see what his plot is! Oh, the wretch!

Eleanor — What do you mean?

Leonardo — I mean that I see through his plot, his cunning scheme, and that I shall find a way of punishing him. [*He paces up and down, irate and threatening.*] As sure as there is a God in heaven, I will punish him!

Eleanor — What plot is this?

Leonardo — He took advantage of my absence!

Eleanor — How, and why?

Leonardo — How? By ruining your beauty. Why? Because he hates me — because he hated your beauty, and said to himself, "We will destroy it." The villain!

Eleanor [*dismayed*] — Destroy it! So it is quite, quite lost?

Leonardo — I mean — that is, he wanted to destroy it, but he could not succeed — of course he could not.

Eleanor — No, no, he did succeed! And I knew it, and now you know it too. It does not matter, for myself. I was neither beautiful nor vain. But I care on your account. You cherished an illusion, and — it is vanished!

Leonardo — Do not say such things, or you will drive me mad! Do not say that I have lost my cherished ideal, for you do not know what I am capable of doing. No, this man must not remain unpunished! You are mine, mine only, — and now I will look after Arnold. But you must rest now, a long, quiet rest. Soon we shall be united forever, but first I must settle matters with Arnold. You shall see, you shall see! [*Goes madly toward bell, and rings.*]

Eleanor — What are you going to do?

Leonardo — He shall come here. [*A Servant comes.*] Tell Mr. Arnold that he must come here at once — that your mistress desires to see him. [*Exit Servant.*]

Eleanor — Dear Leonardo, do be calm! — for heaven's sake, be calm!

Leonardo — Impossible! Listen, I believe I shall feel again all the pleasure I took in seeing you, when I see this wretch again! He shall make up now for all that he has made you suffer!

Eleanor — But perhaps he did not bring about all my suffering. What if it were my fate?

Leonardo — Fate ! What a notion ! How innocent and unsuspecting you are ! He knew what he was about.

Eleanor — No, no, Leonardo, he is incapable —

Leonardo — But some one is responsible for the evil that has fallen upon you. God alone knows who. But in my mind he, Arnold, is responsible. And I must — ah, he is coming.

SCENE X.

ARNOLD enters.

Eleanor — Alas ! alas ! [*Throws herself on sofa.*]

Arnold — You sent for me, Eleanor ?

Leonardo — No, it was I.

Arnold — They told me Eleanor.

Leonardo — I ordered them to say so, because I thought if you knew I wanted you — you would not come.

Arnold — Quite possible !

Leonardo — It is quite certain you would not have come — for fear !

Arnold — I, afraid of you ? I think not !

Leonardo — Ah, you are not afraid of me ? So much the better !

Arnold — 'Tis the truth.

Leonardo — And it should be true, too. You are still young, almost young, that is, — not an old man, by any means. And you are strong, — you should be no coward, — all of which I appreciate in you.

Arnold — Thanks for the good qualities you are pleased to discover in me !

Leonardo — And now for the bad ones !

Arnold — Oh, they are many !

Leonardo — Still, we can condense them into one word — you are a scoundrel !

Eleanor — Oh, Leonardo ! For heaven's sake, —

Leonardo — Let me alone ! You see he takes it quietly ! You can say anything to him with impunity, — anything, anything !

Arnold — Certain persons may, yes !

Leonardo — Myself, for example ?

Arnold — Yes, you.

Eleanor — Oh, Arnold, you too !

Leonardo — Do not interrupt him ! Arnold, are you perfectly aware of what you have done ?

Arnold — And what have I done, pray ?

Leonardo — Eleanor was left in your care. You were like a father to her, responsible to God and responsible to me for this girl ;—for though a woman, she was still a girl, who obeyed you like a timid child. You took possession of her, body and soul,—understand me clearly, of her body and of her soul ! And now you have proved a traitor to your trust,—a villain and a coward in your treatment of her. For what have you made of her, of our Eleanor ?

Arnold — I will tell you. Her soul is more pure than ever before, because suffering always purifies, and even more when in a holy cause ;—her body—but for you who love her so, what does this earthly beauty matter ? Her health is daily improving, and she will soon be strong again. I have saved her, and I bring her here to give her into your hands, into her husband's care. I do not oppose it ! But why are you annoyed ?

[*LEONARDO stands in silent dismay ; ELEANOR goes up to him.*

Leonardo — He has the cunning of all malicious people, but there is an evil purpose lurking beneath it. My heart is loyal, and tells me so !

Arnold — Eleanor's heart will tell you the contrary !

Leonardo — Well, what is done, is done ! Let us never speak of it again. But what of the intention—if Eleanor had died ?

Arnold — But she did not. I took great care of her, and God could not abandon her.

Leonardo — A malicious traitor, of most refined cunning, sly and fallacious in your arguments, you still have the better of me, and I acknowledge it. I confess you say things that I cannot answer : you hold me as in a vice, and yet, in spite of all, though I may be a fool, and a pitiable sort of fellow,—still I am a man of honor, and you—you are not ! This I consider to be proved beyond dispute, that you are at heart a villain ! In short, sir, as you have failed to inspire me with confidence in your honesty of purpose, I do not wish you to remain a day longer, no, not an hour, in Eleanor's presence !

Arnold — You would turn me out of the house ?

Leonardo — Precisely !

Eleanor — Oh, Leonardo, how can you ! How can you wish to send him from the house ?

Arnold — When you are her husband you will have this right, but not now. Until then I cannot comply with your wishes.

Eleanor — Leonardo, Arnold, would you kill me with grief?

Leonardo — No, my love, no ; — but this man must leave you !

Eleanor — Leonardo !

Leonardo — You do not dare, and yet you really think as I do. Tell him to go ! Have no fear of him !

Arnold — Afraid ? And why should she be ? She is mistress of herself and of her own house.

Eleanor — Oh, Arnold !

Arnold — My child, do not grieve over this. I can love you and pardon you. Speak out your whole thought with perfect freedom, — you will neither offend me nor annoy me.

Leonardo — Eleanor ! You can hesitate between him and me ?

Eleanor — No, Leonardo, you first of all ! [*She embraces him.*]

Leonardo — This time I have won !

Arnold — You have won, and it is only natural. I will leave this house at once, but openly and proudly, as is my right. [*He rings.*]

Eleanor — What would you do ?

Leonardo — What does it matter to you ?

Arnold [*to Servant*] — Ask the ladies and gentlemen here to kindly step this way. [*Exit Servant.*]

Eleanor — For heaven's sake, Arnold, pray think — consider —

Arnold — Have no fear.

Leonardo — Do not be afraid, dear.

Arnold — You cannot remain alone here until the marriage takes place. I will suggest to one of the gentlemen here, Fabian, perhaps, that he should come here with his wife, or that you should go to them. I have summoned them to arrange this and to say good-bye to them all, nothing more.

Eleanor — You are treating me cruelly, both of you, cruelly !

Arnold — I, Eleanor !

Leonardo — I am treating you cruelly, Eleanor, and you say this on his account ? Ah, Eleanor, this is not love ! —

Eleanor — You were never angry with me before.

Leonardo — I am mad ! Pardon me ! It is because of him, and he is smiling at it ! My God, give me calm !

SCENE XI.

PAULINA, CAMILLA, TRINIDAD, FABIAN, JACINTH, ALBERT,
all enter by twos and threes.

Arnold — You will pray excuse me for having interrupted you in this way, but I find I must leave this house forever, and I do not wish to slip away like a thief in the night ! Besides, I must talk over something of great importance with Fabian, and would beg him to go with me to my rooms.

Paulina [to CAMILLA] — What's this he's saying ?

Trinidad [to ALBERT] — What is it all about ?

[*They speak in low murmurs together, showing great surprise.*

Fabian — I am at your service.

Arnold — Good-bye, Eleanor !

Eleanor — Arnold, it is impossible ! [*She rushes to his arms, unable to restrain herself.*] I owe you too much for us to part in this way ! [*Weeping.*]

Leonardo — No, no ! All of you will understand how things are, and you will guess that Eleanor's excessive generosity will not allow her to say what you all of you know.

Arnold — I accuse her of no sort of ingratitude.

Leonardo [to ARNOLD] — How dare you talk of accusing, and of accusing her ? I will try to restrain myself, but my patience has its limits ! [*Turns to them all.*] This man is to leave this house, not because of Eleanor, who is still capable of a friendly feeling toward him, but because I have demanded that he should. I cannot allow in her presence a man who is capable of sacrificing her, as he has lately done, in so pitiful a manner ! In short, I would have you all know that I turn him out of this house ! And if this is an insult, Arnold, if this is an affront, know that I hold my person ready to answer for my words !

Eleanor [*goes to him, and endeavors to restrain him*] — Silence, Leonardo, for God's sake, silence !

Arnold — I could hold you in no way responsible for your precipitate words ! Good-bye, Eleanor. You will call upon me when you are in need, and God grant that it may not be soon ! [*Exeunt ARNOLD and FABIAN.*]

Eleanor — Oh, Leonardo, how grieved I am !

Leonardo — For whom? For him or for me?

Eleanor — For both, and alas! for myself as well.

Leonardo — Ah, this fellow leaves the house, but his evil spirit still haunts her mind! Away, away! O evil spirit of the "man in black." [*Waves his hands in frantic passes over ELEANOR'S brow; all surround her, striving to console her.*]

ACT III.

The stage-setting remains unchanged.

SCENE I.

Albert — So Miss Paulina and Miss Camilla are here?

Maid — Yes, sir, they are with Mrs. Fabian and Miss Eleanor.

Albert — And no one else?

Maid — No, sir, no one else.

Albert — Then do me this favor. I know you are very discreet —

Maid — Oh, Mr. Albert!

Albert — Well, of course you are! Then make some excuse for going in, and in a low voice you must beg Miss Paulina and Miss Camilla to come into this room, because I have to consult them for a moment about something very important.

Maid — With pleasure, sir. [*About to go.*]

Albert — But listen — no one but the two young ladies are to know about this. You understand?

Maid — Yes, sir, and perhaps the young ladies have gone into the conservatory — they wanted to get some flowers.

Albert — So much the better! Well, you will go at once.

Maid — Yes, sir, at your service, sir. [*Exit at right.*]

SCENE II.

Albert — Paulina and Camilla are very kind and frank, and will tell me all I would like to know. They are very sympathetic and devoted to Eleanor, and deeply interested in Leonardo, too. Here they are, now! How promptly they answer their summons! [*They enter very hastily.*]

Paulina — Well, Albert.

Camilla — Good day, Albert.

Paulina — The maid told us with a great show of mystery that you wanted to speak to us, and in the most strict privacy!

Albert — Quite right, and to both of you!

Paulina — You see, dear, he is joking!

Camilla — Yes, it is all some joke of his.

Albert — On the contrary, it is something very serious — of the greatest importance.

Camilla — Yes? —

Paulina — Tell us, do!

Albert — Come over here, then, with me. [*Leads them to sofa, and sits down between them.*] A most private conference! Just we three in the secret!

Paulina — Oh, do begin!

Albert — You two are here almost all day long, and know about everything that goes on, — you understand, — everything!

Paulina — I think so. I think so! Since Arnold went from here — that is, since they drove him away — a month, now, isn't it? —

Camilla — A little more.

Albert — Go on, I understand.

Paulina — Well, since then both of us have been here pretty much all the time — we lunch with Eleanor, and dine with her and Leonardo. In fact, we just about live here with her!

Camilla — What else could we do, Albert? We must keep the poor girl company. She is so sad, the dear thing!

Paulina — And how could she be anything else? Her constant companion is Fabian's wife, Gertrude, and you know! —

Albert — Yes, I know, — she came to stay until the day of the marriage.

Paulina — Yes, the poor lady! She means well, and we have the greatest regard for her, — but, my dear, she is harder to get along with than Fabian himself; you may imagine how poor Eleanor feels!

Camilla — Leonardo comes every morning and every evening, but of course he can't be here all the time. And as Gertrude never leaves Eleanor for a moment, poor Leonardo is naturally bored to death! And Eleanor, poor soul, grows sadder every day.

Paulina — If it weren't for us, they would die! These unhappy lovers would die! They really would. But look

here! you called us in to tell us something, and instead of that we seem to be telling you all we know!

Albert — I can't get a word in, just because you are telling it all!

Paulina — Well, not another word from us!

Camilla — Not one, sir!

Albert — My dear friends, now let us begin at the very beginning. First, when is the wedding to be? What have you heard about it? What can you tell me?

Paulina — Why, surely you, who are Leonardo's best friend, ought to know more about it than we.

Albert — That's just it! Leonardo does not know himself, and that's the greatest pity of all. Between us, in perfect confidence you understand, Leonardo is going mad. You do not know how desperate he is! I am really afraid of his reason.

Paulina — So he does not know when he is to be married?

Camilla — And has he asked you to ask us?

Albert — No, I came on my own account, without saying a word to Leonardo, to make out what the trouble is here — for there is something wrong, and seriously so. They are conspiring against Leonardo and against Eleanor, in order to separate them. There is no doubt possible — they are trying to separate them! It is infamous, and I'm not joking about this, you know.

Paulina — You are quite right, there is something wrong. There is a plot, an outrageous one, and we are on your side!

Camilla — Paulina and I have said so time and time again. They are placing some difficulty in the way of the wedding.

Albert — We shall see! Give us your proofs!

Camilla — Well, in the first place you must know that Fabian, Gertrude, and Arnold are all one! They are just hand and glove!

Paulina — They've stepped in between Leonardo and Eleanor with some evil design, and are deliberately trying to separate them!

Camilla — And then another thing is — they've made it impossible for Eleanor to fix the date of her own wedding day!

Albert — Yes, I know. When Leonardo asks her she avoids answering his question.

Paulina — And again, I have often found her crying, in her room.

Camilla — But what I am going to tell you next is even more important. One evening when Leonardo was going away, after talking some time with Eleanor, I followed him quietly because he was so pale I was afraid he might do himself some harm. Well, when he came in here he just pressed his head between his clenched fists, and I am certain he was sobbing to himself! I did feel so sorry for the poor fellow!

Paulina — But what I am going to tell you now is even worse, and [to CAMILLA] I have not even told you yet. [*They draw nearer in their desire to hear.*] Arnold and Eleanor write to each other! And Fabian arranges about it, and perhaps even encourages this mysterious correspondence! I know it for a fact!

Albert — I was afraid of this, and so was Leonardo. If Leonardo should meet him! — but God grant they may not meet.

Paulina — Silence, here comes Eleanor!

Albert — We will have our talk out later on.

SCENE III.

ELEANOR enters.

Eleanor [*comes in as if lost in thought, her head sunk on her breast; she walks mechanically and is talking to herself*] — Yes, this very day we must decide! Why prolong the agony? What must be, must be! Neither he nor I can hold out against them any longer! [*Sees the others.*] Ah, you are here? Good day, Albert.

Albert — And very much at your service, Eleanor!

Eleanor — Yes, I know. You're a true, good friend.

Albert — You seem pensive, and full of care!

Eleanor — I, pensive? Oh, no, just as usual.

Paulina [*slyly*] — I know what she is thinking of!

Camilla — And I, too! Who will guess?

Eleanor — You dear girls are always talking nonsense!

Paulina — May I tell? You will not be angry? It is not too indiscreet?

Albert — Do let us know!

Paulina — She was thinking of fixing her wedding-day; now, weren't you?

Camilla — That was it, but she need not confess.

Albert — How happy Leonardo will be, if it is only true!

Eleanor — Do you think it would make him so very happy?

Albert — What a question! And how it would pain him to think you could ask it.

Eleanor — Why so?

Albert — Because — because if you do not make up your mind to appoint the solemn day the poor fellow is — well, you know how he feels.

Eleanor — He is very sad? Yes, he must be, I am sure.

Paulina — Now, Eleanor, you must listen to us! We are both of us very angry with you, and Albert, too! — all three of us!

Eleanor — Angry, with me? Why are you?

Paulina — You can be very mad with me if you want to, and call me imprudent, indiscreet, prying, and whatever else you like — but we are angry because you are so ungrateful and cruel — so very cruel!

Eleanor — I, cruel!

Paulina — Now don't make believe you do not understand, and in addition to everything else play the hypocrite! Yes, a thousand times yes, you are ungrateful and cruel to poor unhappy Leonardo.

Camilla — And I say the same, too!

Albert — And I refrain from repeating it solely out of respect for you!

Paulina — You do not love him as he loves you!

Eleanor — You say I do not love Leonardo!

Camilla — No, you do not. Paulina is right.

Albert — And he does not deserve your coldness, on my word of honor.

Paulina — And we think so, too!

Eleanor [*looks at them fixedly with ill-concealed pain; at length she begins to answer them, her emotion growing deeper and deeper as she continues*] — You say I do not love him? — that he loves me better than I do him? I ought not to make this confession, and yet, why should I not, as you are all like sisters to me, and Albert my dearest friend! And sometimes I feel the need of hearing my own thoughts spoken aloud! This talking to myself, day and night, is getting to be an intolerable torture. I must tell you now that you are wrong! I love him, and I love him now more than ever, as faithfully as ever mortal loved. I do not know — angels may love more deeply, but

of womankind, women who have human hearts, not one loves as I do!

Paulina — Ah, what would Leonardo give to hear you!

Camilla — It would drive him wild with joy!

Paulina — You can tell him, word for word! You have only to learn your lesson perfectly.

Albert — I?

Eleanor — No, no, I forbid you — I entreat you! Now I can never be frank with you again.

Albert — Eleanor, of course I will obey you. [*Sadly.*] Evidently you have some reason for not wishing him to know it, but I cannot guess why.

• *Eleanor* — Because — Well, I have my reasons. I want Leonardo to live calmly, peacefully, without remorse.

Paulina — What curious ideas you are bringing to light! Remorse, because one is greatly loved! It is the first case on record!

Camilla — And you really love him more than ever?

Eleanor — Oh, much more! Before I loved him calmly, and now — I love him to distraction!

Paulina — Another riddle?

Eleanor — No, it is no riddle, as you call it, but the natural result of circumstances. Formerly, as every one told me I was pretty, — Leonardo oftener than any one else, — and as my luxurious surroundings helped the illusion, — my mirror flattered me, and I was little more than a child, I believed it. So I was torn between love for Leonardo and a certain selfish and vain love of my own person. But now — now my vanity, my beauty — if it ever existed — all, all have vanished, and Leonardo stands alone, without a rival in my love. At present, in the whole wide world, there is for me no love, no dream of happiness, no thought, beyond Leonardo. And if he alone is left to me, what can I do but cling firmly to my one hope? For him is left my pain-racked body, my pale, thin face, all these ruins of a woman's beauty, — but the soul is untouched, entire! there is no pallor, no stain! not even that fell disease had power to rack the soul!

Paulina — Oh, you are grand!

Camilla — This is true love!

Albert — If only Leonardo could hear you say this!

Eleanor — It would torture him, perhaps. But he must never hear it, never! Let me look. [*Goes to left, pulls aside drapery, and looks into room.*]

Camilla — What are you doing? What are you looking for? [*She lets curtain fall.*]

Eleanor — I thought he might have come, but there is no one there. [*Smiles sadly.*] He spends hour after hour in that room. He has placed my bust there, my birthday gift, and has improvised a sort of workshop—a studio. The poor fellow persists in thinking the bust must resemble me, that with two or three strokes of the chisel we shall turn out alike, and yet he dares not touch it. I find him almost constantly here, gazing and gazing at the marble, his eyes filled with tears. [*Showing great excitement again.*] No, no, there is no use in trying to deny it. The blow has struck me hard, but for Leonardo and his love it has been—fatal! Courage is of no further avail! I must put an end to it all.

Albert — Eleanor, I beg of you—

Paulina — Hush, I think I hear Fabian coming!

Camilla — Fabian always comes opportunely!

Albert — Yes, he never fails to!

SCENE IV.

FABIAN *enters.*

Fabian — Paulina, Camilla, we have met before to-day.

Paulina — Yes.

Fabian — But not my good friend Albert.

[*They shake hands.*]

Albert — No.

Fabian [*goes to ELEANOR and speaks in low tone, with great mystery*] — Arnold is here. As you sent for him to come—

Eleanor — Certainly. You need make no mystery of so simple a matter. I was told that Arnold was waiting to see me, and I asked him to come.

Albert — Eleanor, I regret it, on Leonardo's account.

Paulina — After what has happened—if Leonardo should meet him—

Eleanor — What difference does it make? He must learn it this very day,—I must tell him, and so I must see him. Fabian, if you will be so kind as to call him.

Fabian — Certainly, he is waiting in this room. [*Exit in search of ARNOLD.*]

Albert — I do not know just how to express it, but I foresee—

Eleanor — Something very sad? — and I too!

Albert — Well, good-bye, dear Eleanor.

Eleanor — Good-bye, Albert, you will always be my friend.

Albert — Always! [*Goes to rear.*]

Paulina — Then we will leave you with Arnold. Fabian bores us to death, but Arnold frightens us to death!

Eleanor — Poor man!

[*PAULINA and CAMILLA join ALBERT.*]

Paulina [*to ALBERT*] — Are you going to tell Leonardo everything?

Albert — I don't quite know yet. I am going to wait for him — to detain him if he comes.

• [*Exit ALBERT, PAULINA, CAMILLA. They pass ARNOLD at door, and all bow.*]

. SCENE V.

Arnold — You sent for me, and here I am.

Eleanor — Thank you, you are always so good to me.

Arnold — I do my best to be.

Eleanor — I shall trouble you to-day for the last time.

Arnold — How so, the last time?

Eleanor — Because I must put an end to the whole situation, and I will do so to-day. This torture cannot continue.

Arnold — You suffer greatly, then?

Eleanor — Yes, greatly. But my suffering is of little importance. I wish to prevent all further unhappiness in Leonardo's life.

Arnold — You are still thinking of him?

Eleanor — Yes, always. He is always my first thought.

Arnold — Then why am I here?

Eleanor — Possibly to bring about what you desire most, — that my marriage with Leonardo should be definitely given up, — that I should leave this house with you, and hide myself in the shadow and the silence of the cloister.

Arnold — And the great peace —

Eleanor — No, not for me! For me there is nothing left now but everlasting despair!

Arnold — Then you stay here?

Eleanor — No, now that I have thought it all over, it cannot be. Leonardo loves all that is noble, all that is pure, all that is beautiful — for beauty is but a form of what is good —

only mean, low minds hate what is beautiful. Leonardo is fond of me, but how can he love me now! When I look in the glass I feel no love, not even sympathy for myself — nothing but hatred! And why demand the impossible of Leonardo?

Arnold — This is vanity, Eleanor, vanity and vexation of spirit! You will perfect the greatest of all sacrifices, but not in purity of spirit, not without dragging it through the mire of human nothingness! But tell me just what you have decided upon.

Eleanor — Leonardo is struggling desperately!

Arnold — Yes, I know. He feels this wild desire to flee from you, sees that it would be a base action, and so refrains — from pity!

Eleanor — No, not that either. If you use the expression “from pity” in order to wound my pride, you make a mistake. I neither feel the blow, nor does it leave a wound. Leonardo does not hesitate, nor has he hesitated. If I say “to-morrow is our wedding-day,” to-morrow it will be. He is in despair because he hopes for that first fresh love, and cannot find it. We love the pure snow, the fresh rose, the fair light of day, but who could cherish a heap of gray ashes, or love them — or kiss them? It is the will of God; — as God willed, so He made us, and one can hardly expect of Leonardo that he should improve on God’s own work!

Arnold — But even now your desire is not quite clear to me?

Eleanor — I desire Leonardo’s happiness, nothing more than that. And our Heavenly Father is witness that I speak the truth.

Arnold — His happiness —! Yes! There is no word in the human language that is not a lie! Do you know what you will finally do? I will tell you. You will struggle, knowing that you are not to conquer. You will luxuriate deliciously in your sacrifice, knowing all the while that you are not going to sacrifice yourself. And at the end you will go to the altar with Leonardo, you will become his wife. And as he does not really love you, he will be the victim of your cruel sport! Then the day will come when you receive your punishment — the day when his beauty-loving eyes shall light upon a fairer woman! Then, as you have said God has ordained that we should love snow and roses and all that is bright and lovely, and that tears alone are shed on the pale ashes of our fires, on

that day you will be an object of pity to Leonardo, if not a troublesome burden, an odious obstacle!

Eleanor — No, no, not that! How well you know the sore spot in my heart! Another woman? Never! May I never live to see that day! No, I would sooner die than incur his contempt, his hatred.

Arnold — Do not speak of dying. While there are still duties to fulfill we have not the right to die. While there exists selfishness which should be punished, the chastisement should not be withheld. So long as there is a sacrifice to be made, we must not flinch.

Eleanor — Yes, you are in the right. It is strange that when you wring my soul the hardest, then you are most surely in the right. I must not hesitate, I will decide at once.

Arnold — Yes, but when?

Eleanor — Now, at once!

Arnold — Have you the courage? I very much doubt it.

Eleanor — I shall find it.

SCENE VI.

Enter PAULINA and CAMILLA. They come in hastily, talking together. Then PAULINA goes to ARNOLD, as if to divert his attention, while CAMILLA and ELEANOR talk in low tones.

Paulina [*to ARNOLD*] — Are we interrupting you? Do we disturb you?

Arnold — Not in the least.

Paulina — Leonardo is coming with Albert. I warn you so you may not meet each other. It seemed to me —

Eleanor — You are right. Arnold, come this way, please. I have something more to say to you.

Arnold — Just as you say. [*They all turn to right; as ARNOLD allows the ladies to pass first, LEONARDO enters and recognizes him. He starts forward, but ALBERT holds him back; exit ARNOLD.*]

SCENE VII.

Leonardo — It is he! I am sure of it! I feel it in my heart!

Albert — Whom do you mean?

Leonardo — That man! His influence makes itself felt directly. Why is he such a coward, or why is he so cold? It is useless to provoke him, useless to insult him. Ah, if he were only willing, how quickly we might end this affair!

Albert — I believe you exaggerate. Your tragic genius constantly lures you on to imagine some great catastrophe!

Leonardo — I feel it is coming! It is very near now — very near — perhaps this very day.

Albert — But why are you possessed with this idea?

Leonardo — Why? Why are things as they are? Simply because they are so! And it is all one to me now. I wish to put an end to it, come what may! Perhaps Arnold is here for that purpose. I would like him to remain with Eleanor, that he may poison her soul, and then I too, with them — and at last, the final struggle.

Albert — But I see in this no catastrophe, no final struggle, nothing of the sort. It is quite natural he should call on Eleanor. Then to-morrow the wedding-day will be fixed upon, and you marry Eleanor, and that is the only tragic dénouement possible to your comedy!

Leonardo — Eleanor does not yield — she doubts me, and shuns me. She no longer loves me — perhaps even despises me.

Albert — She loves you better than her own soul, and does not attempt to conceal it. She said so, not long ago, on this very spot, and with words that rang with passion and with truth. If you could only have heard her!

Leonardo — She is so good that she will not deny me her love, but at heart she despises me, — and she is quite right to.

Albert — You are unreasonable, Leonardo. Why should she despise you?

Leonardo — Because I deserve it, and because I despise myself — because I hate myself! For whom do you imagine I hate worst in this world? Arnold? Not at all, but my own self. Arnold may be a low-minded fellow and a hypocrite — I believe he is — still he is a man of penetration and talent and knows me well — better than I know myself, perhaps.

Albert — Do not say that sort of thing!

Leonardo — I am a wretch, a vulgar, heartless being. My affections are false, my enthusiasm but a will-o'-the-wisp, my tenderness a mere mask, which I wear for my own benefit! — and so foolish am I that I can always deceive myself at will!

How sad you are, I say to myself, and then I weep! How happy you are! — and I laugh! I am but a ridiculous puppet, and my feelings pull the strings. My whole being is governed by the external, the superficial, the coloring of things. The worthless tinsel of nature fascinates me, my mind is filled with tinkling nonsense, in my hands art is but a child's rattle!

Albert — Stop, stop, Leonardo. I will not listen to another word!

Leonardo — And what do I care if you do not listen, if I must keep on repeating it, day and night, above all, at night! As a mother puts her baby to sleep with a drowsy sing-song, so I, after long sleepless hours, can only make sleep come by repeating aloud: I despise myself, I despise myself, I despise myself — and so, by dint of despising myself, I fall asleep!

Albert — It's certainly enough to drive you crazy. And do explain the whole case to me, for I have never understood —

Leonardo — But nothing can be simpler. Did I not love our Eleanor with a love which I believed to be deep, true, — endless? Then Arnold foresaw — it was an illusion, nothing but an illusion! For listen, when Eleanor ran the cruel risk of losing her beauty, and I, when I saw her, was so dismayed, so sad! — I can never tell you how sad! — at that instant I felt that I despised myself to such a degree that I would gladly have fled from myself, flinging to the winds heart, brains, feelings, taking with me the one thing I recognized to be mine, — black nothingness — for I am naught!

Albert — But, Leonardo, then you do not love Eleanor?

Leonardo — That is the point — and that is the one thing that has kept me alive. When I think that I shall lose her, the agony is terrible, my despair grows blacker, and 'way down in the depths, in the very depths of my being, an unexpected tenderness is springing into life!

Albert — Then you love her!

Leonardo — But do I not tell you I have lost all confidence in myself? How can I know —

Albert — These are the vagaries of an artistic temperament.

Leonardo — I cannot tell. But listen. I will not give her up, and I am ready to sacrifice my life, if necessary. To be sure, it's no great thing —

Albert — You do yourself an injustice, Leonardo. You're a good-hearted fellow.

Leonardo — No, I am not modest. I have a firm will, firm

and invincible, and for this reason I shall fulfill my duty. I shall punish myself for this when the time comes for punishment, and for this I will fight until I conquer. Eleanor shall be mine, because she loves me and her happiness depends upon it. Whether I am happy or not is of little consequence. I will make believe!

Albert — So that —

Leonardo — So that to-day everything shall be decided. I have no fear concerning myself. My will only counts in that I make it obey me. Eleanor shall be happy.

Albert — She herself said a short time ago, “Leonardo first of all!” She sacrifices herself for you, thinking you do not love her. You have doubts about your love for her, but she has none! She knows she worships you!

Leonardo — So much the better! This puts new life in me!

Albert — And now for the struggle. I think she is coming.

Leonardo — Alone?

Albert — Yes, alone. I will leave you together.

[*Exit at left.*]

SCENE VIII.

ELEANOR enters.

Eleanor — Leonardo!

Leonardo — Eleanor! [*Goes to meet her.*]

Eleanor — We are alone? [*She looks around in every direction.*] I do not see clearly, as it is growing late — as it begins to grow dark in here. [*Her voice trembles.*]

Leonardo — And as your eyes are full of tears!

Eleanor — I will not try to deceive you. It is true, I have been crying and — I am crying still!

Leonardo — Did Arnold make you cry?

Eleanor — Ah, you knew that he was here?

Leonardo — I knew it. Look, what a proof of my confidence in you! I let him poison your soul against me, and said no word!

Eleanor — No, he was only giving me advice.

Leonardo — Oh, you go to another man when you need advice? Do you love me less then — or perhaps not at all?

Eleanor [*passionately*] — You can ask me that? Listen! I have loved you, always, but now I love you more than ever

before. I shall die, still loving you! With my last sigh I shall strive to breathe your name — “Leonardo,” and if I cannot finish it, and if God lets me enter His heavenly kingdom, — in heaven, before our Heavenly Father, I will at last utter the whole dear name, “Leonardo!”

Leonardo — Oh, Eleanor!

Eleanor [*aside*] — How selfish I have been! If I tell him this, he will sacrifice himself to me. My love is very great — not passionate, as it used to be, but it is deeper.

Leonardo — I cannot bear to have you feign a feeling — either exaggerating your love or making me believe that you love me less.

Eleanor — But indeed, I tell you the truth. Our love has changed its nature, but how can we seek to remedy that? — I live as by a miracle, without strength, nor beauty, nor youth — my love was like a flaming fire, that blazed for a brief moment — now the heat has gone, and only the light remains. Suppose our marriage had taken place before this misfortune, for we cannot deny that it is a great misfortune — and suppose that years and years had passed, that I had grown old — then you could not love me as you once did, nor could I love you with the old warmth. [*This with resigned sadness and then continuing with passion.*] And yet, I should love you warmly; I desire no other good, wish for no other happiness than to think of you always, to be with you always in dreams, — to die with all the tortures of the Inferno if I doubt your love!

Leonardo — You really loved me before, Eleanor, — your love has not changed?

Eleanor — No, no; in spite of myself I say these things that I ought not to say. You see — they are so fresh in my memory — those happy days! [*Aside.*] My God, give me courage!

Leonardo — Eleanor, we must decide now, instantly. You are suffering greatly, and I feel it will drive me mad! Really, at times I feel my mind is failing!

Eleanor — Yes, we must come to a decision. For this I came to you here, and for this — I am weeping!

Leonardo — Oh, Eleanor, because of what you are going to say to me?

Eleanor — Yes.

Leonardo — Were they tears of joy or tears of grief?

Eleanor — Of grief — of great grief. Still, we must go

through with it, for your sake and for mine — for your future, which I hope will be full of happiness and fame, — and for my calm, which is all that is left to me now!

Leonardo — I do not understand you.

Eleanor — Leonardo! you must know —

Leonardo — Yes, I understand! Yes, you are planning to flee from me — this man is taking you from me! And do you think I can tamely resign myself to that? Eleanor, would you be happy at my side? Then we will both be happy. If you die of grief, then I will die with you. Were you no longer a fair woman, dear, but a lifeless form of clay, it were all one to me. Dead, I would lift you from your shroud, hold you in my arms, and then — let God do with us as He will.

Eleanor — No, Leonardo, do not say this, for my strength begins to fail me. It may not be! It may not be!

Leonardo — Let this man come, and let me stand out against you both! Arnold! Arnold!

Eleanor — Yes, let him come! Alas, I can hold out no longer.

Leonardo — Arnold! Arnold! — at last!

SCENE IX.

ARNOLD enters.

Arnold — You called me?

Eleanor — Yes, because I am at the end of my strength! [*She throws herself in his arms. LEONARDO remains at a distance.*]

Leonardo — Yes, I leave her in your arms for the moment — what can it matter? But I swear that I shall win her from them, that she shall be mine forever!

Arnold [*to ELEANOR*] — Have you made up your mind to follow my advice?

Eleanor — Yes.

Leonardo — You see, I make no objections, — I wait passively. Go on! go on!

Arnold — You will come with me to the place where all earthly griefs are forgotten?

Eleanor [*lifting her head and looking at him*] — No, I shall never forget them!

Leonardo [*laughs harshly*] — She does not forget them!

Arnold — But without forgetting them, since that is impossible, you give them up?

Eleanor — Yes.

Arnold [*to LEONARDO*] — You hear?

Leonardo — I hear. If I were not so sure of conquering could I listen so calmly? Would I not rather have torn out your heart! —

Arnold — This is no calm! It is the excitement of fever!

Leonardo — You are right! I feel that every nerve quivers, striving to force me to attack you. “Down with the man in black,” I hear them whisper in my heart, but my will is stronger, and I say: “No, no, this is not the right way; it leads to nothing, — silence, silence!” I feel a wave of hot blood rush to my brain, and there it throbs and throbs, but I bid it be still. It almost blinds me, but still I see clearly enough to know where Eleanor is, and that contents me. I am at peace within, — and so, go on, go on!

Arnold — My dear Eleanor, we must end this for your sake and for his.

Eleanor — Yes, we must — for his sake — anything for his sake.

Arnold — Then go, say good-bye to every one, and come back here, where you will find me waiting for you. Then we will leave this house.

Eleanor — Yes, we will leave this house!

Arnold [*vexed*] — You say yes, but you still linger.

Eleanor — I am going! Yet a little more, and — courage!

Leonardo — Obey! I say nothing! He is waiting, and I am waiting! Have no fear!

Eleanor — Well, then, if it must be — [*Exit slowly.*]

SCENE X.

Arnold — It is for your own good, Leonardo. Make up your mind to it.

Leonardo — To what?

Arnold — To lose her.

Leonardo [*aside*] — And what if I do not lose her?

Arnold — Her memory is still left you.

Leonardo [*aside*] — And she herself!

Arnold — I pity you so, and would not grieve you further — you still have a future, and fame!

Leonardo — Fame? No, not that, but Eleanor, — yes!

Arnold — You are raving!

Leonardo — Possibly. My words may rave, but my will is calm. I see nothing and understand nothing! Everything seems to whirl before my eyes, yet my will stands as firm as the earth's axis. You would have me yield? You believe you may conquer? This is really your thought? What an illusion! In this supreme struggle I shall come out victor — I, Leonardo!

Arnold — Poor fellow!

Leonardo — No, you are the one to be pitied, for you are going away in the pride of conquest. As Satan fell from heaven, so you will fall!

Arnold — This poor fellow has really lost his mind!

Leonardo — You are afraid! Confess it!

Arnold — But what do you intend doing? Are you going to use force?

Leonardo — I do not know — force? — no, that is a poor way!

Arnold — What then?

Leonardo — I know that Eleanor is mine, that she must be, — that my duty exacts it, that my will demands it. But how? I know not! [*Paces back and forth wildly.*] Let her come! Let her but try to leave me, and we shall see. By what means? All means are good — even to tearing out my heart — or yours!

Arnold — But there she is!

Leonardo — And here am I!

SCENE XI.

ELEANOR enters in street dress.

Eleanor [*to ARNOLD*] — Give me your arm — I cannot —

Arnold — Courage, my dear.

Eleanor — Farewell, Leonardo!

Leonardo — Eleanor, you are going to leave me?

Eleanor — I do it for your sake — I swear it!

Leonardo — And you will go from this house with this man, and I shall never see you again?

Eleanor — Nor shall I see you!

Leonardo — You will be sorry for it.

Arnold — Do not listen to him. These are idle threats.

Leonardo — I repeat, you will be sorry for this!

Arnold — He is trying to intimidate you! Come!

[They take a few steps toward door.]

Leonardo — I tell you for the last time, — you will live to repent it. *[ELEANOR and ARNOLD are already at the door.]*

Eleanor — Farewell, forever!

Leonardo *[in a tragic voice that thrills one with horror]* — If you take another step I shall never see you again! — ah, mad girl, you would not have me see you? Then I never shall again! Wait, I tell you, wait! *[He rushes madly to his studio at left.]*

SCENE XII.

Eleanor — What can he mean? — I shall repent — but why?

Arnold — Come, child, come. *[He tries to lead her away.]*

Eleanor — No, I could not leave him in this way — I could not! Do you not see I could not?

Arnold — We must. If we do not go now we never shall!

Eleanor — He said I should regret it. He has some attempt in his mind — some design — do you not fear something?

Arnold — Yes, I fear you will regret your sacrifice! *[Tries to lead her to door.]*

Eleanor — But I will not go without seeing him — for the last time! *[She resists his efforts.]* I tell you it is for the last time!

Arnold *[he continues the struggle]* — No!

Eleanor — This is obstinacy on your part!

Arnold — Yes, of your passion!

Eleanor — Of your own!

Leonardo *[a terrible cry of pain is heard from the studio]*
— *Eleanor!* —

Eleanor — He is calling me! Do you not hear that horrible cry?

Leonardo *[from studio]* — *Eleanor!*

Eleanor — What desperate cries of pain! They freeze my blood!

Arnold — You must not go!

Eleanor — Yes, he is calling to me!

Arnold [*with expression of despair*] — *Eleanor*, I call upon you, too.

Eleanor — But he is first, first above all! [*She tears herself away and rushes to room at left.*]

Leonardo [*he appears at the door, vacillating, stumbling, and leaning on door-frame: his hair is in wild disorder, his dress also. His eyes and cheeks are covered with blood: he comes forward blindly, his hands stretched forward as if seeking some support.*] — *Eleanor*, *Eleanor*, where are you?

Eleanor — Here, *Leonardo*! [*Rushes to his arms.*]

Arnold [*retires to rear of stage, filled with horror*] — Heavens, what have you done? What have you done?

Leonardo — I have punished my wicked eyes! I am blind! blind!

Eleanor — I see nothing but blood!

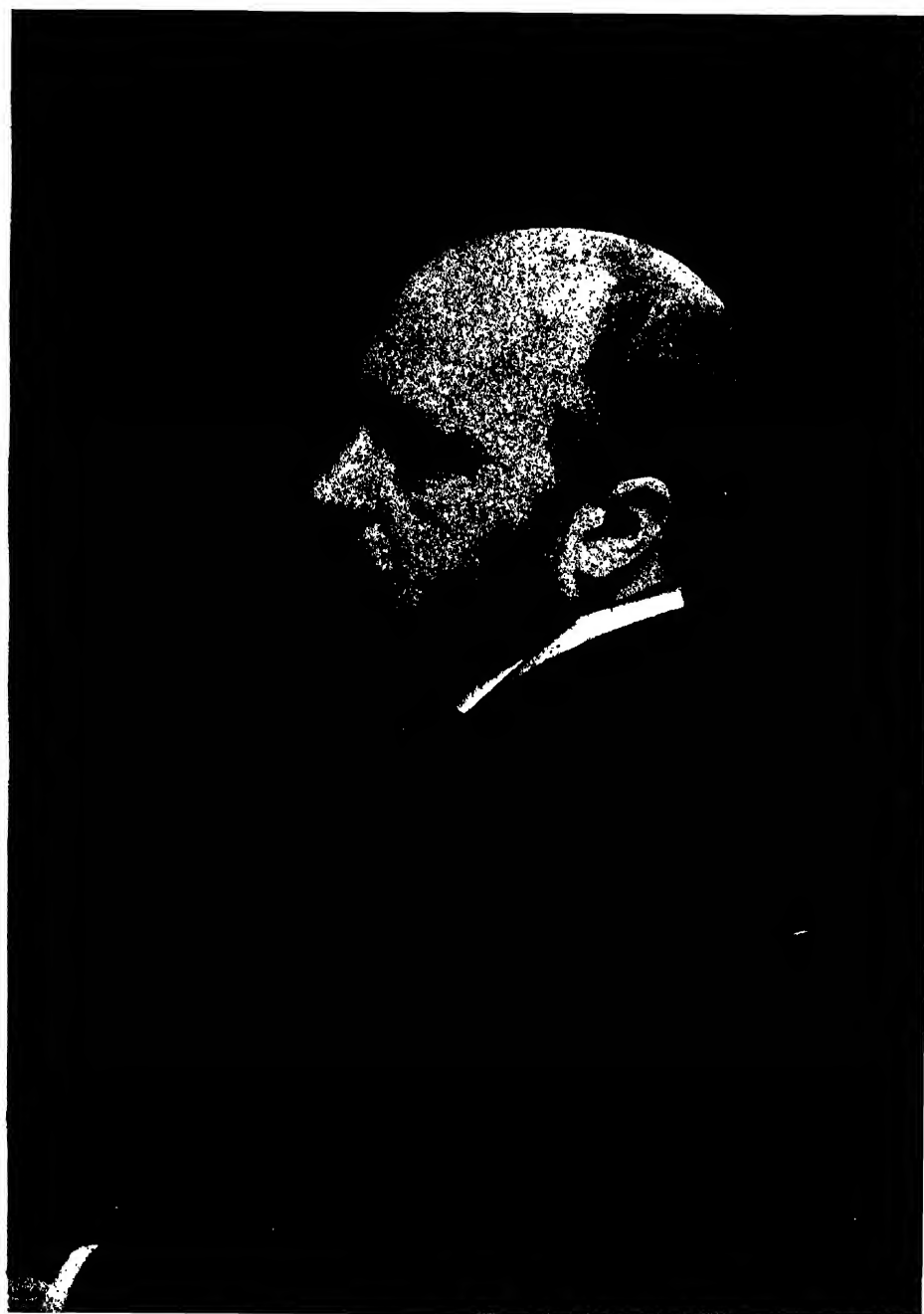
Leonardo — And I, nothing, not even blood! My chisel has made its last stroke — in human flesh!

Eleanor — My soul! My love! Oh, *Leonardo*!

Leonardo — And would you leave me now?

Eleanor — Never, dear, never! [*She clings to him.*] I am yours forever, to all eternity!

Leonardo — To all eternity! She has said it — I have won the battle! And the “man in black” is defeated! And now, may he fall far, may he destroy himself, may he lose all that is worth the having in this life, the “man in black”!



Henry James

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

VOLUME XXVIII.

	PAGE
The Passion Play at Oberammergau	25
Sappho <i>Franz Grillparzer</i>	132
The Weavers <i>Gerhart Hauptmann</i>	190
The Journalists <i>Gustav Freytag</i>	263
King René's Daughter <i>Henrik Hertz</i>	343
It Just Happened So <i>Otto Benzon</i>	388

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

VOLUME XXVIII.

HENRY JAMES	<i>Frontispiece</i>
	PAGE
PILGRIMS TO A WONDER-WORKING SHRINE	124
MARTHA AND IOLANTHE	376

THE FUTURE OF THE NOVEL

BY HENRY JAMES

BEGINNINGS, as we all know, are usually small things, but continuations are not always strikingly great ones, and the place occupied in the world by the prolonged prose fable has become, in our time, among the incidents of literature, the most surprising example to be named of swift and extravagant growth, a development beyond the measure of every early appearance. It is a form that has had a fortune so little to have been foretold at its cradle. The germ of the comprehensive epic was more recognisable in the first barbaric chant than that of the novel as we know it to-day in the first anecdote retailed to amuse. It arrived, in truth, the novel, late at self-consciousness; but it has done its utmost ever since to make up for lost opportunities. The flood at present swells and swells, threatening the whole field of letters, as would often seem, with submersion. It plays, in what may be called the passive consciousness of many persons, a part that directly marches with the rapid increase of the multitude able to possess itself in one way and another of the *book*. The book, in the Anglo-Saxon world, is almost everywhere, and it is in the form of the voluminous prose fable that we see it penetrate easiest and farthest. Penetration appears really to be directly aided by mere mass and bulk. There is an immense public, if public be the name, inarticulate, but abysmally absorbent, for which, at its hours of ease, the printed volume has no other association. This public—the public that subscribes, borrows, lends, that picks up in one way and another, sometimes even by purchase—grows and grows each

year, and nothing is thus more apparent than that of all the recruits it brings to the book the most numerous by far are those that it brings to the "story."

This number has gained, in our time, an augmentation from three sources in particular, the first of which, indeed, is perhaps but a comprehensive name for the two others. The diffusion of the rudiments, the multiplication of common schools, has had more and more the effect of making readers of women and of the very young. Nothing is so striking in a survey of this field, and nothing to be so much borne in mind, as that the larger part of the great multitude that sustains the teller and the publisher of tales is constituted by boys and girls; by girls in especial, if we apply the term to the later stages of the life of the innumerable women who, under modern arrangements, increasingly fail to marry—fail, apparently, even, largely, to desire to. It is not too much to say of many of these that they live in a great measure by the immediate aid of the novel—confining the question, for the moment, to the fact of consumption alone. The literature, as it may be called for convenience, of children is an industry that occupies by itself a very considerable quarter of the scene. Great fortunes, if not great reputations, are made, we learn, by writing for schoolboys, and the period during which they consume the compound artfully prepared for them appears—as they begin earlier and continue later—to add to itself at both ends. This helps to account for the fact that public libraries, especially those that are private and money-making enterprises, put into circulation more volumes of "stories" than of all other things together of which volumes can be made. The published statistics are extraordinary, and of a sort to engender many kinds of uneasiness. The sort of taste that used to be called "good" has nothing to do with the matter: we are so demonstrably in presence of millions for whom taste is but an obscure, confused, immediate instinct. In the flare of railway bookstalls, in the shop-fronts of most booksellers, especially the provincial, in the advertisements of the weekly newspapers, and in fifty places besides, this testimony to the general preference triumphs, yielding a good-natured corner at

most to a bunch of treatises on athletics or sport, or a patch of theology old and new.

The case is so marked, however, that illustrations easily overflow, and there is no need of forcing doors that stand wide open. What remains is the interesting oddity or mystery—the anomaly that fairly dignifies the whole circumstance with its strangeness: the wonder, in short, that men, women, and children *should* have so much attention to spare for improvisations mainly so arbitrary and frequently so loose. That, at the first blush, fairly leaves us gaping. This great fortune then, since fortune it seems, has been reserved for mere unsupported and unguaranteed history, the *inexpensive* thing, written in the air, the record of what, in any particular case, has *not* been, the account that remains responsible, at best, to “documents” with which we are practically unable to collate it. This is the side of the whole business of fiction on which it can always be challenged, and to that degree that if the general venture had not become in such a manner the admiration of the world it might but too easily have become the derision. It has in truth, I think, never philosophically met the challenge, never found a formula to inscribe on its shield, never defended its position by any better argument than the frank, straight blow: “Why am I not so unprofitable as to be preposterous? Because I can do *that*. There!” And it throws up from time to time some purely practical masterpiece. There is nevertheless an admirable minority of intelligent persons who care not even for the masterpieces, nor see any pressing point in them, for whom the very form itself has, equally at its best and at its worst, been ever a vanity and a mockery. This class, it should be added, is beginning to be visibly augmented by a different circle altogether, the group of the formerly subject, but now estranged, the deceived and bored, those for whom the whole movement too decidedly fails to live up to its possibilities. There are people who have loved the novel, but who actually find themselves drowned in its verbiage, and for whom, even in some of its approved manifestations, it has become a terror they exert every ingenuity, every hypocrisy, to evade. The indifferent and the alienated testify, at any rate, almost as much as

the omnivorous, to the reign of the great ambiguity, the enjoyment of which rests, evidently, on a primary need of the mind. The novelist can only fall back on that—on his recognition that man's constant demand for what he has to offer is simply man's general appetite for a *picture*. The novel is of all pictures the most comprehensive and the most elastic. It will stretch anywhere—it will take in absolutely anything. All it needs is a subject and a painter. But for its subject, magnificently, it has the whole human consciousness. And if we are pushed a step farther backward, and asked why the representation should be required when the object represented is itself mostly so accessible, the answer to that appears to be that man combines with his eternal desire for more experience an infinite cunning as to getting his experience as cheaply as possible. He will steal it whenever he can. He likes to live the life of others, yet is well aware of the points at which it may too intolerably resemble his own. The vivid fable, more than anything else, gives him this satisfaction on easy terms, gives him knowledge abundant yet vicarious. It enables him to select, to take and to leave; so that to feel he can afford to neglect it he must have a rare faculty, or great opportunities, for the extension of experience—by thought, by emotion, by energy—at first hand.

Yet it is doubtless not this cause alone that contributes to the contemporary deluge; other circumstances operate, and one of them is probably, in truth, if looked into, something of an abatement of the great fortune we have been called upon to admire. The high prosperity of fiction has marched, very directly, with another "sign of the times," the demoralisation, the vulgarisation of literature in general, the increasing familiarity of all such methods of communication, the making itself supremely felt, as it were, of the presence of the ladies and children—by whom I mean, in other words, the reader irreflective and uncritical. If the novel, in fine, has found itself, socially speaking, at such a rate, the book *par excellence*, so on the other hand the book has in the same degree found itself a thing of small ceremony. So many ways of producing it easily have been discovered that it is by no means the occasional prodigy, for good or for evil, that it was taken for in

simpler days, and has therefore suffered a proportionate discredit. Almost any variety is thrown off and taken up, handled, admired, ignored by too many people, and this, precisely, is the point at which the question of its future becomes one with that of the future of the total swarm. How are the generations to face, at all, the monstrous multiplications? Any speculation on the further development of a particular variety is subject to the reserve that the generations may at no distant day be obliged formally to decree, and to execute, great clearings of the deck, great periodical effacements and destructions. It fills, in fact, at moments the expectant ear, as we watch the progress of the ship of civilisation—the huge splash that must mark the response to many an imperative, unanimous “Overboard!” What at least is already very plain is that practically the great majority of volumes printed within a year cease to exist as the hour passes, and give up by that circumstance all claim to a career, to being accounted or provided for. In speaking of the future of the novel we must of course, therefore, be taken as limiting the inquiry to those types that have, for criticism, a present and a past. And it is only superficially that confusion seems here to reign. The fact that in England and in the United States every specimen that sees the light may look for a “review” testifies merely to the point to which, in these countries, literary criticism has sunk. The review is in nine cases out of ten an effort of intelligence as undeveloped as the ineptitude over which it fumbles, and the critical spirit, which knows where it is concerned and where not, is not touched, is still less compromised, by the incident. There are too many reasons why newspapers must live.

So, as regards the tangible type, the end is that in its undefended, its positively exposed state, we continue to accept it, conscious even of a peculiar beauty in an appeal made from a footing so precarious. It throws itself wholly on our generosity, and very often indeed gives us, by the reception it meets, a useful measure of the quality, of the delicacy, of many minds. There is to my sense no work of literary or of any other, art, that any human being is under the smallest positive obligation to “like.” There

is no woman—no matter of what loveliness—in the presence of whom it is anything but a man's unchallengeably *own* affair that he is "in love" or out of it. It is not a question of manners; vast is the margin left to individual freedom; and the trap set by the artist occupies no different ground—Robert Louis Stevenson has admirably expressed the analogy—from the offer of her charms by the lady. There only remain infatuations that we envy and emulate. When we do respond to the appeal, when we *are* caught in the trap, we are held and played upon; so that how in the world can there *not* still be a future, however late in the day, for a contrivance possessed of this precious secret? The more we consider it the more we feel that the prose picture can never be at the end of its tether until it loses the sense of what it can do. It can do simply everything, and that is its strength and its life. Its plasticity, its elasticity are infinite; there is no colour, no extension it may not take from the nature of its subject or the temper of its craftsman. It has the extraordinary advantage—a piece of luck scarcely credible—that, while capable of giving an impression of the highest perfection and the rarest finish, it moves in a luxurious independence of rules and restrictions. Think as we may, there is nothing we can mention as a consideration outside itself with which it must square, nothing we can name as one of its peculiar obligations or interdictions. It must, of course, hold our attention and reward it, it must not appeal on false pretences; but these necessities, with which, obviously, disgust and displeasure interfere, are not peculiar to it—all works of art have them in common. For the rest it has so clear a field that if it perishes this will surely be by its fault—by its superficiality, in other words, or its timidity. One almost, for the very love of it, likes to think of its appearing threatened with some such fate, in order to figure the dramatic stroke of its revival under the touch of a life-giving master. The temperament of the artist can do so much for it that our desire for some exemplary felicity fairly demands even the vision of that supreme proof. If we were to linger on this vision long enough, we should doubtless, in fact, be brought to wondering—and still for very loyalty to the form

itself—whether our own prospective conditions may not before too long appear to many critics to call for some such happy *coup* on the part of a great artist yet to come.

There would at least be this excuse for such a reverie: that speculation is vain unless we confine it, and that for ourselves the most convenient branch of the question is the state of the industry that makes its appeal to readers of English. From any attempt to measure the career still open to the novel in France I may be excused, in so narrow a compass, for shrinking. The French, as a result of having ridden their horse much harder than we, are at a different stage of the journey, and we have doubtless many of their stretches and baiting-places yet to traverse. But if the range grows shorter from the moment we drop to inductions drawn only from English and American material, I am not sure that the answer comes sooner. I should have at all events—a formidably large order—to plunge into the particulars of the question of the present. If the day is approaching when the respite of execution for almost any book is but a matter of mercy, does the English novel of commerce tend to strike us as a production more and more equipped by its high qualities for braving the danger? It would be impossible, I think, to make one's attempt at an answer to that riddle really interesting without bringing into the field many illustrations drawn from individuals—without pointing the moral with names both conspicuous and obscure. Such a freedom would carry us, here, quite too far, and would moreover only encumber the path. There is nothing to prevent our taking for granted all sorts of happy symptoms and splendid promises—so long, of course, I mean, as we keep before us the general truth that the future of fiction is intimately bound up with the future of the society that produces and consumes it. In a society with a great and diffused literary sense the talent at play can only be a less negligible thing ~~than~~ in a society with a literary sense barely discernible. In a world in which criticism is acute and mature such talent will find itself trained, in order successfully to assert itself, to many more kinds of precautionary expertness than in a society in which the art I have named holds an inferior place or makes a sorry figure.

A community addicted to reflection and fond of ideas will try experiments with the "story" that will be left untried in a community mainly devoted to travelling and shooting, to pushing trade and playing football. There are many judges, doubtless, who hold that experiments—queer and uncanny things at best—are not necessary to it, that its face has been, once for all, turned in one way, and that it has only to go straight before it. If that is what it is actually doing in England and America the main thing to say about its future would appear to be that this future will in very truth more and more define itself as negligible. For all the while the immense variety of life will stretch away to right and to left, and all the while there may be, on such lines, perpetuation of its great mistake of failing of intelligence. That mistake will be, ever, for the admirable art, the only one really inexcusable, because of being a mistake about, as we may say, its own soul. The form of novel that is stupid on the general question of its freedom is the single form that may, *a priori*, be unhesitatingly pronounced wrong.

The most interesting thing to-day, therefore, among ourselves is the degree in which we may count on seeing a sense of that freedom cultivated and bearing fruit. What else is this, indeed, but one of the most attaching elements in the great drama of our wide English-speaking life! As the novel is at any moment the most immediate and, as it were, admirably *treacherous* picture of actual manners—indirectly as well as directly, and by what it does not touch as well as by what it does—so its present situation, where we are most concerned with it, is exactly a reflection of our social changes and chances, of the signs and portents that lay most traps for most observers, and make up in general what is most "amusing" in the spectacle we offer. Nothing, I may say, for instance, strikes me more as meeting this description than the predicament finally arrived at, for the fictive energy, in consequence of our long and most respectable tradition of making it defer supremely, in the treatment, say, of a delicate case, to the inexperience of the young. The particular knot the coming novelist who shall prefer not simply to beg the question, will have here to

untie may represent assuredly the essence of his outlook. By what it shall decide to do in respect to the "young" the great prose fable will, from any serious point of view, practically see itself stand or fall. What is clear is that it has, among us, veritably never chosen—it has, mainly, always obeyed an unreasoning instinct of avoidance in which there has often been much that was felicitous. While society was frank, was free about the incidents and accidents of the human constitution, the novel took the same robust ease as society. The young then were so very young that they were not table-high. But they began to grow, and from the moment their little chins rested on the mahogany, Richardson and Fielding began to go under it. There came into being a mistrust of any but the most guarded treatment of the great relation between men and women, the constant world-renewal, which was the conspicuous sign that whatever the prose picture of life was prepared to take upon itself, it was not prepared to take upon itself not to be superficial. Its position became very much: "There are other things, don't you know? For heaven's sake let *that* one pass!" And to this wonderful propriety of letting it pass the business has been for these so many years—with the consequences we see to-day—largely devoted. These consequences are of many sorts, not a few altogether charming. One of them has been that there is an immense omission in our fiction—which, though many critics will always judge that it has vitiated the whole, others will continue to speak of as signifying but a trifle. One can only talk for one's self, and of the English and American novelists of whom I am fond, I am so superlatively fond that I positively prefer to take them as they are. I cannot so much as imagine Dickens and Scott *without* the "love-making" left, as the phrase is, out. They were, to my perception, absolutely right—from the moment their attention to it could only be perfunctory—practically not to deal with it. In all their work it is, in spite of the number of pleasant sketches of affection gratified or crossed, the element that matters least. Why not therefore assume, it may accordingly be asked, that discriminations which have served their purpose so well in the past will continue not less successfully

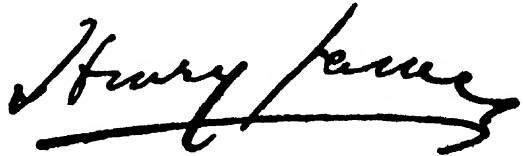
to meet the case? What will you have better than Scott and Dickens?

Nothing certainly *can* be, it may at least as promptly be replied, and I can imagine no more comfortable prospect than jogging along perpetually with a renewal of such blessings. The difficulty lies in the fact that two of the great conditions have changed. The novel is older, and so are the young. It would seem that everything the young can possibly do for us in the matter has been successfully done. They have kept out one thing after the other, yet there is still a certain completeness we lack, and the curious thing is that it appears to be they themselves who are making the grave discovery. "You have kindly taken," they seem to say to the fiction-mongers, "our education off the hands of our parents and pastors, and that, doubtless, has been very convenient for *them*, and left them free to amuse themselves. But what, all the while, pray, if it is a question of education, have you done with your own? These are directions in which you seem dreadfully untrained, and in which *can* it be as vain as it appears to apply to you for information?" The point is whether, from the moment it is a question of averting discredit, the novel can afford to take things quite so easily as it has, for a good while now, settled down into the way of doing. There are too many sources of interest neglected—whole categories of manners, whole corpuscular classes and provinces, museums of character and condition, unvisited; while it is on the other hand mistakenly taken for granted that safety lies in all the loose and thin material that keeps reappearing in forms at once ready-made and sadly the worse for wear. The simple themselves may finally turn against our simplifications; so that we need not, after all, be more royalist than the king or more childish than the children. It is certain that there is no real health for any art—I am not speaking, of course, of any mere industry—that does not move a step ~~in~~ advance of its farthest follower. It would be curious—really a great comedy—if the renewal were to spring just from the satiety of the very readers for whom the sacrifices have hitherto been supposed to be made. It bears on this that as nothing is

more salient in English life to-day, to fresh eyes, than the revolution taking place in the position and outlook of women—and taking place much more deeply in the quiet than even the noise on the surface demonstrates—so we may very well yet see the female elbow itself, kept in increasing activity by the play of the pen, smash with final resonance the window all this time most superstitiously closed. The particular draught that has been most deprecated will in that case take care of the question of freshness. It is the opinion of some observers that when women do obtain a free hand they will not repay their long debt to the precautionary attitude of men by unlimited consideration for the natural delicacy of the latter.

To admit, then, that the great anodyne can ever totally fail to work, is to imply, in short, that this will only be by some grave fault in some high quarter. Man rejoices in an incomparable faculty for presently mutilating and disfiguring any plaything that has helped create for him the illusion of leisure; nevertheless, so long as life retains its power of projecting itself upon his imagination, he will find the novel work off the impression better than anything he knows. Anything better for the purpose has assuredly yet to be discovered. He will give it up only when life itself too thoroughly disagrees with him. Even then, indeed, may fiction not find a second wind, or a fiftieth, in the very portrayal of that collapse? Till the world is an unpeopled void there will be an image in the mirror. What need more immediately concern us, therefore, is the care of seeing that the image shall continue various and vivid. There is much, frankly, to be said for those who, in spite of all brave pleas, feel it to be considerably menaced, for very little reflection will help to show us how the prospect strikes them. They see the whole business too divorced on the one side from observation and perception, and on the other from the art and taste. They get too little of the first-hand impression, the effort to penetrate—that effort for which the French have the admirable expression to *fouiller*—and still less, if possible, of any science of composition, any architecture, distribution, proportion. It is not a trifle, though indeed it is the

concomitant of an edged force, that "mystery" should, to so many of the sharper eyes, have disappeared from the craft, and a facile flatness be, in place of it, in acclaimed possession. But these are, at the worst, even for such of the disconcerted, signs that the novelist, not that the novel, has dropped. So long as there is a subject to be treated, so long will it depend wholly on the treatment to rekindle the fire. Only the ministrant must really approach the altar; for if the novel is the treatment, it is the treatment that is essentially what I have called the anodyne.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Henry James". The signature is written in dark ink and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

THE PASSION PLAY

AT OBER-AMMERGAU.

Translated by MARIA TRENCH.

PART I.

FROM CHRIST'S ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM TO HIS BEING TAKEN
CAPTIVE IN THE GARDEN OF GETHESEMANE.

ACT I.

PROLOGUE.

Enter the CHORUS or SCHUTZGEISTER. The CHORAGUS (or leader of the Chorus) exhorts the spectators to a devout contemplation of the holy drama, explaining its great lesson — God reconciled to man through Christ. "All hail!" he says, "welcome to the band of brothers, whom love divine hath here assembled, who wish to share the sorrows of their Saviour, and to follow Him, step by step, in the way of His sufferings to the cross and the sepulchre." He intones and sings —

In holy wonder cast thee down,
O race oppressed by God's own curse!
Peace be to thee! From Sion peace once more!
He is not wroth for aye,
The offended One — His wrath is ever just.

"I desire not," thus saith
The Lord, "the sinner's death — I will
Forgive him — he shall live again!
My Son's own blood shall reconcile him."

Praise, worship, tears of joy to Thee, Eternal!
Yet, Holiest, shall the dust now dare
Into the Future's Sanctuary to gaze?

The curtain rises and discloses the First Tableau: The Expulsion from Paradise.

The Chorus sings —

From Eden's groves mankind is driven,
Sin's night and death's dread terror bound him,
To the 'Tree of Life, his way is barred,
With flaming sword threatens the Cherub's hand.

Yet from afar, from Calvary's height,
A morning gleam shines through the night,
From the branches of the Tree of shame
Through all worlds flow airs of balmy peace.

God of Mercy! sinners to forgive
Who Thy law have shamefully despised,
Thou dost give, to free them from the curse,
Unto bitter death Thine only Son.

Second Tableau: The Adoration of the Cross.

Chorus [kneeling] —

Eternal! hear Thy children's falt'ring prayer!
Only with stamm'ring lips a child can pray.
They who gather round the mighty offering
In holy veneration worship Thee.

Follow the Atoner now beside,
Until He His rough and thorny path
Hath fully run, — and in fiercest strife
Bleeding fought for us, and won the fight.

CHRIST'S *Entry into Jerusalem.*

SCENE I.

A multitude of people enter singing. JESUS enters Jerusalem amid the rejoicing of the PEOPLE, followed by the DISCIPLES, who each carry a pilgrim's staff. The CHILDREN and PEOPLE sing:

Hail to Thee! Hail! O David's Son!
Hail to Thee! Hail! The Father's throne
Belongs to Thee.
Who cometh in the Highest's Name,
Whom Israel onward throngs to meet,
Thee we adore!

Hosanna! He who dwells in Heav'n
 All gracious favor pour on Thee.
 Hosanna! He who reigns above
 Preserve Thee ours for evermore.
 Hail to Thee, etc.

Blessed be He who now restores
 Our father David's seed and reign!
 Ye people, bless, praise, and exalt
 The Son, His Father's image true.
 Hail to Thee, etc.

Hosanna to our royal Son!
 Resound on every breeze afar!
 Hosanna! On the Father's throne
 Let Him in majesty aye rule.
 Hail to Thee, etc.

SCENE II.

CHRIST, *the* APOSTLES, *and the* PEOPLE, PRIESTS, PHARISEES,
and MERCHANTMEN, *in the Court of the Temple.*

Christ — What do I behold? Shall My Father's House be thus dishonored? Is this the House of God? Or is it a market-place? Shall strangers, who come from heathen lands to worship God, perform their devotions here amidst this tumult of usury? And ye, O Priests, guardians of the sanctuary! ye behold the iniquity, and suffer it? Woe unto you! He, who searcheth the heart, knows wherefore ye permit this wrong.

Traders — Who, then, is this?

People — It is the great Prophet of Nazareth in Galilee.

Christ [*to the* TRADERS] — Go hence, ye servants of Mammon! I command it. Take that which is yours and depart from the Holy Place.

Priests — Why troublest Thou this people? All this is for sacrifice. How canst Thou forbid what the High Priest's Council permits?

Traders — Are men no longer to offer sacrifices?

Christ — Without the Temple are places sufficient for your business. My House, thus saith the Lord, shall be called a

House of Prayer for all people ! But ye have made it a den of thieves. [*He overthrows the tables.*] Take all this hence !

Traders — My money, alas, my money ! My doves ! [*The doves fly away.*] Who will make good the loss to me ?

Christ [*with a scourge of cords*] — Go hence ! I will that this consecrated place be given back to the worship of the Father !

Priests — What signs showest Thou that Thou hast power to do these things ?

Christ — Ye seek after signs ? Yea, a sign shall be given unto you : destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.

Priests — What boastful words ! Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt Thou raise it up in three days ?

People — Blessed be He that cometh in the name of the Lord !

Priests — Hearest Thou what these say ? Rebuke Thy disciples.

Christ — I say unto you, If these should hold their peace, the stones would cry out.

Children — Hosanna to the Son of David !

Pharisees — Will ye be silent, ye simple ones ?

Christ — Have ye never read, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise ? The things which are hidden from the proud are revealed unto babes. And the Scripture must be fulfilled : the stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner : the Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given unto a people that shall bring forth the fruits thereof. But that stone — whosoever shall fall upon it shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder. Come, my disciples ! I have done as the Father gave me commandment, I have vindicated the honor of His House. The darkness remains darkness ; but in many hearts the day star will soon arise. Let us go into the sanctuary, that we may there pray unto the Father. [*Exit.*]

People — Praise to the Anointed !

Priests — Be silent, ye worthless ones !

Pharisees — Ye shall all fall with Him.

People — Blessed be the Kingdom of David, which again appears !

SCENE III.

PRIESTS *and* PEOPLE.

Nathanael — Let him who still holds with our Fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, be on our side ! Let the curse of Moses be on all others !

Rabbi — He is a Deceiver !

People — Why have ye not taken Him ? Is He not a Prophet ? *[Some of the PEOPLE go out after JESUS.]*

Priests — He is a teacher of evil !

Nathanael — O thou, blind people ! wilt thou go after one who is new, and wilt thou forsake Moses, the Prophets, and thy Priests ? Fearest thou not the curse which falls upon deserters ? Will ye cease to be the chosen people ?

People — We will not !

Nathanael — Who has to watch over purity of teaching ? Is it not the holy Sanhedrim of the people of Israel ? Whom will ye hear, us, or Him who gives Himself out as the proclaimer of a new teaching ?

People — We will hear you — we will follow you !

Priests — The God of your Fathers will bless you for it.

SCENE IV.

Enter the TRADERS, the "CHIEF TRADER" DATHAN at their head, making a tumult.

Traders — This fellow must be punished. Vengeance ! He shall pay for His audacity. Money, oil, salt, doves — He must make good everything ! Wherever He is He shall feel our revenge !

Priests — He has departed.

Traders — We will go after Him.

Nathanael — Stay, friends ! The following of this Man is still too great ; a dangerous fight might take place, to which the sword of the Romans would make an end. Trust us : He shall not escape His punishment.

Priests — With us, and for us, that is your welfare.

All — Our victory is near !

Nathanael — We are now going hence to inform the Council of the High Priests of to-day's events.

Traders — We will go with you. We must have satisfaction.

Nathanael—In an hour come to the Court of the High Priests. I will bring your complaint before the Council and plead for you. [*Exeunt the PRIESTS.*

Traders and People [as they are departing]—Moses is our Prophet! Praised be our father!

ACT II.

Council of the HIGH PRIESTS.

PROLOGUE.

The CHORUS enter from either side of the proscenium. The CHORAGUS, after dwelling on the envy which moves the Pharisees to conspire against our Lord, and exhorting the spectators to give their hearts in thankfulness and attention to the drama, recites, in allusion to the last scene:—

The wicked wretches now are gone —
In the full light the hideous shape unmasked —
The rags of virtue from sin's garment torn —
By gnawing conscience torn and scourged,
“Up, let us think on vengeance!” wild they cry;
“Let us the long-determined plot begin.”

First Tableau: JOSEPH cast into the Pit by his Brethren.

Chorus—

Open, O Lord, to us Thy sanctuary!
Old times present to us deceiver's plans;

As Jacob's sons 'gainst Joseph do conspire:
So shall ye of this viper brood
Full soon for Jesu's death and blood
The tigerish, vengeful outcry hear.

“See there, the dreamer comes;
He wills,” unshamed they cry,
“To rule us as a king.
Away with this fanatic!

“Ha! there in that deep pit
May he his plan unfold.”
Thus for the just one's blood
Thirsteth that viper brood.

"He is," they cry, "against us,
Our honor is at stake;
All are gone after Him,
They follow us no more."

O God, destroy this evil band,
Who against Thee now rise up;
And to murd'rous league, in scorn
Of Thine only Son, swear faith.

Let Almighty thunders peal,
Let Thy righteous lightning burn,
That they feel Thine anger's strength;
Strike them downward into dust!

A single Schutzgeist singeth :

No! never came He to destroy
From the Father's Majesty.
Sinners shall through Him inherit
Pardon, grace, and endless bliss.

Chorus —

Humbly then we here adore
The great plan of Thy dear love,
We Thy children, O our God!

SCENE I.

The Members of the Sanhedrim.

Caiaphas — Venerable Brothers, Fathers, and Teachers of the People! An extraordinary occurrence is the extraordinary occasion of to-day's consultation. Hear it out of the mouth of our worthy brother.

Nathanael — Marvel not, O Fathers, that at so late an hour ye are called together for action. It is only too well known to you, what we have, to our shame, been forced to-day to behold with our own eyes. Ye have seen the triumphal procession of the Galilean through the Holy City. Ye have heard the Hosanna of the befooled people; ye have heard how this proud One has arrogated to Himself High Priestly dignity. What yet is wanting for the destruction of all civil and ecclesiastical order? Yet a few steps further, and the holy law of Moses is destroyed through the novelties of this teacher of

error. The institutions of our fathers are despised, fasts and purifyings done away with, the Sabbath desecrated, the priests of God despoiled of their office, the holy sacrifices at an end.

All — Yea, verily, it is true.

Caiaphas — And yet more. Encouraged by His followers, He will give Himself out as King of Israel; then will there be division in the land and rebellion against the Romans, and these will not delay to destroy both land and people. Woe to the children of Israel, to the Holy City, to the Temple of the Lord! It is full time that the evil be exterminated. The responsibility lies upon us; even to-day a resolution must be taken, and what is resolved upon must be carried out without hesitation or looking back. Will ye put your hands to this work?

All — We will.

First Priest — A stop must be put to the doings of the Seducer.

Second Priest — We ourselves are partakers in the guilt in that it has gone so far. Against this overwhelming destruction too mild measures were used. What have our disputings with Him availed? What fruit has there been from our putting Him in a dilemma by question? What has even been done by the excommunication pronounced upon any one who should acknowledge Him as Messiah? If there is to be peace, we must make sure of His person, and put Him in prison.

All — Yea, that must be done.

Third Priest — If He is once in prison, the credulous people will be no longer fascinated by the attraction of His presence and the magic of His words; and if they have no longer any wonder to gape at, all will soon be forgotten.

Fourth Priest — In the darkness of the dungeon He can let His light shine, and announce Himself as Messiah to the prison walls.

First Pharisee — Long enough has He led the people astray, and branded as hypocrisy the strict virtue of the holy order of the Pharisees. Let Him expiate His misdeeds in bonds!

Second Pharisee — It will cool the fanaticism of His followers if He, who promised them freedom, Himself lie bound.

Annas — Now, venerable priests, a ray of comfort and joy once more warms my heart, since I see your unanimous resolution. Alas! an unspeakable sorrow weighed upon my soul at the sight of the onward course of the wrong teaching of this

Galilæan. Have I, a miserable old man, only lived so long, in order to behold the overthrow of the sacred law? But now I will not lose courage. The God of our fathers still lives and is with us. If ye, fathers of the people, quit you like men, salvation is nigh. Have courage to be the saviours of Israel.

All — We are of one mind.

Priests — Israel must be saved.

Caiaphas — Honor to your unanimous resolution, worthy brethren. But now assist me with your wise counsels as to the surest way of getting this Deceiver into our power.

First Pharisee — To take Him now, on the feast day, would be too dangerous. In the streets and in the Temple, everywhere He is surrounded by a troop of insensate followers.

Priests — And yet it must be done at once; the matter allows of no delay. Perchance during the time of the feast He might raise an insurrection, and then it might happen that we should take the place which we have arranged for Him.

Other Priests — No delay!

Second Pharisee — We cannot now set to work altogether with open force, we must overcome Him quietly with guile. We must find out where He commonly spends the night, and so He could be surprised and brought into safe keeping without witnesses.

Nathanael — People will soon be found to track the fox to his hole, if it pleased the Council to offer a suitable reward.

Caiaphas — If ye, assembled fathers, think it good, I will, in the name of the Council, give the order that any one who knows His nightly resort should inform us of the same, and also a reward should be secured to the informant.

All — We agree entirely.

Nathanael — Doubtless those men could serve us as informers whom the Galilæan to-day, in the sight of all the people, has deeply injured. Before this they were jealous adherents of the law, and now they are thirsting for revenge against Him who has made such an unheard-of attack upon their privileges.

Caiaphas — Where are the traders to be found?

Nathanael — They are ready in the outer court. I have persuaded them to be the defenders of their rights before the holy Sanhedrim, and they await your orders.

Caiaphas — Worthy priest, announce to them that the Council is inclined to take up their grievance, and bring them in.

[*Exit NATHANAEL.*

SCENE II.

Caiaphas — The God of our fathers has not yet withdrawn His hand from us. Moses yet watches over us. If we succeed in gathering around a knot of men out of the people, I shall no longer fear. Friends and brothers ! let us be of good courage, our fathers look down upon us from Abraham's bosom.

Priests — God bless our High Priest !

SCENE III.

Nathanael — High Priests and chosen Teachers ! These men, worthy of our blessing, appear before this assembly, in order to bring a complaint against the well-known Jesus of Nazareth, who to-day in the Temple in an unheard-of manner has troubled them and caused them loss.

Traders — We beseech the Council to procure us satisfaction. The Council must protect our righteous demand.

Priests and Pharisees — Ye shall have satisfaction ; we will be your sureties for that.

Traders — Has not the Council given us leave to set out openly in the court all that is necessary for sacrifice ?

Priests — Yes, that we have permitted ; woe to him who disturbs you in this your right !

Traders — And the Galilæan has driven us out with a scourge ! And the tables of the money-changers has He overthrown, and emptied the dove-cages ! We demand satisfaction !

Caiaphas — That ye should have satisfaction the law decrees. Your loss shall meanwhile be made good to you out of the treasury of the Temple. But that the culprit himself should be punished, for this we need your coöperation. What can we do to Him so long as He is not in our power ?

Traders — He goes daily into the Temple ; there He can easily be taken prisoner and led away.

Caiaphas — That will not do. Ye know that He has a crowd of excited followers, and therefore a dangerous uproar might take place. It must be done quietly.

Traders — It would be best done in the night.

Caiaphas — If ye find out whither He withdraws Himself at night, He will soon be in our hands without any tumult.

Then ye will not only have the joy of seeing Him chastised, but also a considerable recompense will be awarded to you.

Nathanael — Ye shall also gain merit concerning the law of Moses.

Traders — On our part there shall be no failure. We will shun no trouble.

Chief Trader — I know one of His followers through whom I can easily accomplish something if I can offer him a corresponding reward.

Caiaphas — If thou findest out such a one, make all promises to him in our name. Only delay not, in order that we may accomplish our end before the feast.

Annas — And observe strictest silence.

Traders — We swear it.

Caiaphas — If, however, good fellows, ye wish that the longing for vengeance should be fully satisfied, take also every possible trouble to kindle in many others the holy zeal which burns in you.

Traders — Since that occurrence, we have made use of every moment for this purpose, and many are already on our side. We will not rest till all the people rise up against Him!

Annas — By these means ye will lay the Council under an obligation of greatest gratitude.

Caiaphas — Ye will then be openly honored by the whole people, as ye have been openly put to shame before them.

Traders — Our lives for the law of Moses and the holy Sanhedrim!

Caiaphas — The God of Abraham guide you!

Traders — Long live Moses! Long live the priests of the holy Sanhedrim! Even to-day may the Galilean have played out His part. [Ereunt.

SCENE IV.

Caiaphas — As though strengthened by a sweet sleep I live once more! With such men all can be carried through. Now we shall see who will conquer: He, with His followers, to whom He unceasingly preaches love — a love which is to include even publicans and sinners; yea, and the heathen also — or we, with this troop, animated by hatred and revenge, which we send against Him.

Annas — May the God of our fathers grant us victory! How then will joy in my old age renew my youth!

Caiaphas — Let us break up. Praised be our fathers!

All — Praised be the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob!

ACT. III.

The Parting at Bethany.

PROLOGUE.

The CHORAGUS explains the relation of the two tableaux to the leaving of Christ — who with clear gaze pierces the veil of the future, and already sees the gathering storm at hand, which threatens to discharge itself upon His head. While still amongst His own He speaks words to His beloved friends concerning separation — words, alas! which most bitterly wound His devoted Mother's soul. See with what deep trouble the mother of Tobias gazes after the departing son of her heart, and pours out her grief in streaming tears of tender love! Thus also the Mother of the Son of God laments her Beloved, who departs, determined to efface the sins of mankind through love's expiatory death! Behold the bride in the great Song of Solomon, how she complains, "The Bridegroom has disappeared!" How she calls and seeks and gives herself no rest till she find Him! Calmer is the anguish in Mary's soul; as a sword piercing her whole heart, yet softened through the pious resignation of trust in God.

Chorus —

Ah, they come, the parting hours!

Deepest wounds they now inflict,

Mary, on thy heart!

Ah, thy Son must leave thee now,

On the cross to faint, to die; —

Who can weigh that Mother's woe?

First Tableau. The Departure of TOBIAS from his Home.

Chorus —

What a bitter grief, O friends,

Agonized the mother's heart,

As Tobias — Raphael

His guide — at his father's word

Hastened to a foreign land!

With a thousand woes and sighs

Oft on her beloved she calls:

Come, ah come, and tarry not.

Light and comfort of my heart,

Come, return full soon again!

Ah, Tobias, dearest one!
 Haste thee to mine arms again.
 Dearest son! in thee alone
 Can my heart again rejoice —
 Joy in fairest happiness.

Comfortless it now laments,
 Never of existence glad,
 Till a bright and blissful hour
 To his mother's breast once more
 Her beloved son shall bring.

*Second Tableau: The Lamenting Bride of the Canticles, with
 Eight Daughters of Jerusalem.*

Chorus —

Whither is he gone, O whither?
 Fairest of the sons of men!
 Ah, mine eyes run down with tears —
 Tears of tender love for him.

Come, O come, return again!
 See my ever flowing tears:
 What, beloved! thou dost delay
 Me to thy dear heart to clasp?

Everywhere I look for thee,
 Seek for thee in every place,
 With the sun's first ray of light
 Hastes my heart to meet thy steps.

Ah! what feel I! my beloved!
 With what anguish breaks my heart!

Chorus of Daughters of Jerusalem —

Beloved companion, comfort take!
 Thy friend again will come to thee.

O wait, dear maid, he quickly comes,
 And clasps thee to his heart again: —
 No cloud can ever darken more
 The bliss of that reunion.

Both Choruses —

O come into my arms, O come!
 And clasp me to thy heart again;
 And no cloud ever darken more
 The bliss of that reunion!

SCENE I.

CHRIST *and the* TWELVE DISCIPLES.

Christ — Ye know, beloved disciples, that after two days is the feast of the Passover. Let us then now take our last rest with our friends at Bethany, and then go up to Jerusalem, where in these days all will be fulfilled, which is written in the Prophets concerning the Son of man.

Philip — Has the day then come at last when Thou wilt restore again the kingdom of Israel?

Christ — The Son of man shall be delivered up to the Gentiles, and shall be mocked and spitted upon, and they shall crucify Him, but on the third day He shall rise again.

John — Master, what dark, fearful words speakest Thou! How shall these things come to pass? Tell us plainly.

Christ — The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

Thaddeus — What meaneth He by these words?

Simon — Wherefore doth He liken Himself to a corn of wheat?

Andrew — Lord, Thou speakest at once of shame and of victory. I know not how to reconcile these in my thoughts.

Christ — That which is dark as night to you will become clear as day. I have told you before that ye may not lose courage, whatever may happen. Believe and hope. When the tribulation is over, then shall ye see and understand.

Thomas — I cannot consent to that which Thou speakest of suffering and of death. What can Thine enemies do to Thee? One single word from Thee will grind them to powder.

Christ — Thomas, adore the secret counsel of God which thou canst not fathom. Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you.

SCENE II.

Enter SIMON, LAZARUS, MARTHA, *and* MARY MAGDALENE.

Simon — Dearest Master, I greet thee.

Christ — Simon, for the last time, I, with my disciples, claim thy hospitality.

Simon — Not so, Lord. Often again shall Bethany secure to Thee a short repose.

Christ — Lo, Lazarus, our friend !

Lazarus [*embracing Him*] — My Lord, conqueror of death !

Magdalene — Rabbi !

Martha — Hail, Rabbi !

Christ — The blessing of God be upon you !

Martha — Shall I dare, O Lord, to serve thee ?

Magdalene — Wilt Thou also not despise a token of love from me ?

Christ — Do that which is in your heart to do, dear souls.

Simon — Dearest Master, enter under my roof and refresh Thyself and Thy disciples.

SCENE III.

The guest-chamber in SIMON'S house.

Christ — Peace be to this house !

Disciples — And to all who dwell therein !

Simon — Lord, all is prepared.

Christ — Let us then, beloved disciples, with thankfulness enjoy the gifts which the Father from heaven vouchsafes to us through His servant Simon. O Jerusalem ! O that my coming were as dear to thee as it is to these my friends ! But thou art stricken with blindness.

Lazarus — Yea, Lord, the Pharisees and teachers of the law watch for Thy destruction.

Simon — Tarry here ; here Thou art in safety.

Peter — Lord, it is good to be here. Tarry here till the storm which will gather has broken.

Christ — Get thee behind me, tempter ! Thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men. Shall the reaper tarry in the shade when the fields are ripe unto harvest ? The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.

Judas — But, Lord, what will become of us when Thou givest up Thy life ?

An Apostle — Alas ! all our hopes have, then, come to nothing.

Christ — Calm yourselves. I have the power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

Magdalene [*advances and pours ointment upon the head of CHRIST*] — Rabbi!

Christ — Mary!

Thomas — What a costly odor!

Bartholomew — It is a costly, precious ointment of spikenard.

Judas — To what purpose is this waste? The cost of it might have been better laid out.

Thomas — To me also it seemeth thus.

[*MAGDALENE kneels and anoints the feet of CHRIST.*]

Judas — To pour away such a costly ointment! What waste!

Christ — Friend Judas, look me in the face! Waste on Me, on thy Master?

Judas — I know that Thou lovest not useless expense. The ointment might have been sold and the poor thereby supported.

Christ — Judas, lay thy hand upon thy heart. Is it only sympathy for the poor which so greatly moves thee?

Judas — Three hundred pence at least could have been got for it. What a loss for the poor and for us!

Christ — The poor ye have always with you, but me ye have not always. Let her alone, she hath wrought a good work on me, for in that she poured this ointment on me she did it for my burial. Verily I say unto you: wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world there shall also that which she hath done be told for a memorial of her. [*To SIMON.*] I thank thee, thou beneficent one, for thy hospitality. The Father will reward thee for it.

Simon — Master, speak not of thanks. I know what I owe to Thee.

Christ — It is time to go hence. Farewell to all, O dwellers in this hospitable house! Follow me, my disciples.

Peter — Lord, whithersoever Thou wilt, only not to Jerusalem.

Christ — I go whither my Father calls me. Peter, if it please thee to remain here, do so.

Peter — Lord, where Thou abidest, there also will I abide, where Thou goest, there also will I go.

Christ — Come, then!

SCENE IV.

Christ [*to MAGDALENE and MARTHA*] — Tarry here, beloved! Once more, farewell! Beloved, peaceful Bethany! Never more shall I tarry amid thy still valleys.

Simon — Master, wilt Thou then indeed depart hence? Ah, fearful forebodings oppress me!

Christ — Stand up, Mary! The night cometh, and the storms of winter howl around! Yet — be comforted! In the early morning in the spring-garden thou shalt see me again.

Martha — Alas! dost Thou depart and never more return?

Christ — The Father wills it, my beloved ones! Where I am I bear you in my heart, and where ye are there will my blessing follow you. Farewell!

[*As He is going, MARY enters with her companions.*]

SCENE V.

Mary — Jesus, most dear Son, with desire have I hastened to Thee with my friends to see Thee again before, alas! Thou goest hence.

Christ — Mother! I am on the way to Jerusalem.

Mary — To Jerusalem! There is the Temple of Jehovah, whither once I bore thee in my arms, to offer Thee to the Lord.

Christ — Mother, now has the hour come when I, according to the Father's will, shall offer Myself. I am ready to accomplish the sacrifice which the Father requires from me.

Mary — Ah, forebodings tell me what an offering this will be!

Magdalene — Oh, how greatly have we longed to keep back the Master with us!

Simon — His resolve is steadfast.

Christ — Mine hour is come. Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say: Father, save me from this hour? But for this hour came I into the world.

Mary — O Simeon, venerable old man! now will that which thou didst prophesy to me be fulfilled: "A sword shall pierce through thine own soul."

Christ — Mother! the Father's will was ever sacred to thee also.

Mary — It is so to me. I am the handmaid of the Lord. Only for one thing, my Son, I pray Thee.

Christ — What desirest thou, my Mother?

Mary — That I may die with Thee.

John — What love!

Christ — Thou wilt suffer with me, beloved Mother, thou wilt combat with me, and then also rejoice with me in my victory. Therefore be comforted!

Mary — O God, give me strength !

Holy Women — Dearest Mother, we weep with thee.

Mary — I go, then, with Thee, my Son, to Jerusalem.

Women — Dearest Mother, we go with thee.

Christ — Later ye may go thither ; but now abide with our friends at Bethany. I commend to you, O faithful souls, my beloved Mother, with those who have followed her hither.

Magdalene — There is none dearer to us after Thee than Thy Mother.

Lazarus — If Thou, O Master, couldst but tarry !

Christ — Comfort ye one another ! But after two days ye may together take your way to Jerusalem in order to be there upon the great day of the feast.

Mary — As Thou wilt, my Son.

Women — Alas, how sadly will the hours pass by far from Thee !

Christ — Mother ! Mother ! For the tender love and motherly care which thou hast shown to me during the thirty-three years of my life, receive the warmest gratitude of thy Son. The Father calls me. Farewell, dearest, dearest Mother !

Mary — My Son, where shall I see Thee again ?

Christ — There, dearest Mother, where the Scripture shall be fulfilled : He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and He opened not His mouth.

All — What affliction is before us all !

Christ — Be not overcome in the first struggle ! Hold ye still in me. [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

CHRIST'S *Last Journey to Jerusalem.*

PROLOGUE.

People of God ! behold, thy Redeemer is at hand. The long-promised One has come. O hear Him ! Follow His leading. Life and blessing will He bring thee, yet Jerusalem shows herself deaf and blind, and puts back the offered hand. Therefore the Highest turns away from her, and lets her sink into perdition. The pride of Vashti disdains the King's banquet, therefore the King, grievously provoked, banishes her from His Presence, and chooses a nobler soul as His consort. Thus will the synagogue be cast out, and the kingdom of God, taken from it, will be given to other nations, which shall bring forth the fruits of righteousness.

Chorus —

Awake, Jerusalem, awake!
And know what yet belongeth to thy peace:
But waverest thou — the hour of vengeance comes,
Unhappy one! with awful sound it strikes.

Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
Return thee to thy God!
Scorn not, with evil mockery,
The warning call of grace;
That not unhappy one, on thee
In measure full one day be poured
The anger of our God most High!

But ah, — alas! the prophet — murd'ress,
With evil mind she rushes on.
Therefore, thus saith the Lord,
This people I reject.

Tableau: VASHTI rejected by AHASUERUS, and ESTHER chosen Queen.

Chorus —

See Vashti — see the proud one is cast out!
Figuring God's purpose for the Synagogue.

“Remove thee now from off thy throne,
Proud Queen! deserving not the crown,”
Ahasuerus speaks in wrath.

“Thine, fairest Esther, thine it is
This day beside the king to reign,
Here chosen for the royal throne.

“The time of grace hath pass'd away;
I will cast out this nation proud,
Even as I live,” thus saith the Lord.

“A better people I will choose —
Espouse to me for evermore,
As Esther Ahasuerus chose.”

Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
Ye sinners! hear the word of God.
Even still would ye find grace.
Destroy from out your inmost hearts
The leaven of your sins.

SCENE I.

CHRIST and the TWELVE on the way to Jerusalem.

John — Master, behold what a splendid outlook towards Jerusalem !

Matthew — And the majestic Temple. What a stately building !

Christ — Jerusalem, Jerusalem ! O that thou hadst known, even in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace ! But now they are hid from thine eyes. [*He weeps.*]

Peter — Master, wherefore grieveest thou so sorely ?

Christ — My Peter ! the fate of this unhappy city goes to my heart.

John — Master, tell us, what will be this fate ?

Christ — The days will come when her enemies shall make a trench about her and close her in on every side, and they shall lay her even with the ground, and her children in her : and they shall not leave one stone upon another.

Andrew — Wherefore shall the city have so sad a fate ?

Christ — Because she hath not known the day of her visitation. Alas ! the murderers of the Prophets will kill the Messiah Himself.

All — What a fearful deed !

James the Great — God forbid that the city of God should lay such a curse upon itself !

John — Master, for the holy city's sake, for the Temple's sake, I pray Thee go not thither, so that the opportunity may be wanting to evil men to accomplish the worst.

Peter — Or go thither, and manifest Thyself to them in Thy full majesty, that the good may rejoice, and the evil tremble.

Philip — Strike down Thine enemies !

All — And set up the kingdom of God amongst men !

Christ — Children, what ye desire will come to pass in its time, but my ways are appointed unto me before of my Father, and thus saith the Lord : My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are my ways your ways. To-day is the first day of unleavened bread, on which the law commands that the paschal meal shall be held. Do ye both, Peter and John, go before, and prepare us the paschal lamb, that we may eat it in the evening.

Peter and John — Where wilt Thou, Lord, that we should prepare it ?

Christ — When ye shall come unto the city, there shall a man meet you bearing a pitcher of water ; follow him into the house whither he goeth, and say to the master of the house : The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guest-chamber where I shall eat the passover with my disciples ? And he will show you a large upper room, furnished and prepared ; there make it ready.

Peter — Thy blessing, dearest Master.

[*PETER and JOHN kneel.*]

Christ — God's blessing be upon you !

[*Exeunt the TWO APOSTLES.*]

SCENE II.

Christ — And ye — follow me for the last time to my Father's house ! To-day ye still go thither with me. To-morrow —

Judas — But, Master, let me say, if in truth Thou wilt leave us, make at least some arrangement for our future sustenance. See here [*he shows the bag*], this is not sufficient for one day more.

Christ — Judas, be not more careful than is needful.

Judas — How well might the worth of that ointment be therein ! Three hundred pence ! How long we might have lived without anxiety !

Christ — Nothing has ever been wanting to thee, and, believe me, nothing will at any time be wanting to thee.

Judas — Yet, Master, when Thou art no longer with us our good friends will soon draw back, and then —

Christ — Friend Judas, see to it that the tempter overtake thee not !

All — Judas, trouble not then the Master so sorely.

Judas — Who will take thought if I do not ? Have I not been appointed by the Master to carry the bag ?

Christ — That thou art, but I fear —

Judas — I also fear that it will soon be empty, and will remain so.

Christ — Judas, forget not my warning ! Now let us go on. I long to be in my Father's house.

[*Exit with the DISCIPLES. JUDAS remains behind.*]

SCENE III.

Judas [alone] — Wherefore should I follow Him? I have no pleasure therein. The Master's behavior is to me inexplicable. His great works give hope that He will again raise up the kingdom of Israel. But He seizes not the opportunities which offer themselves, and now He speaks of separation and death, and comforts us by mysterious words about a dim future. I am weary of believing and of hoping. There is nothing in prospect with Him, except approaching poverty and humiliation, and, instead of the expected participation in His kingdom, persecution, perchance, and prison. I will withdraw myself. Happily, I was always provident, and have laid aside a little here and there out of the bag, on the chance of distress. If that fool had put the worth of the ointment into the bag, now, when our company must, as it seems, break up, the three hundred pence would remain in my hands, then I should be secure for a long time. Now, however, I must think of means by which I may be able to make some profit.

SCENE IV.

JUDAS and the Trader DATHAN.

Dathan [aside] — Judas — the occasion is favorable, he is alone, he seems much perplexed. I must use all means to win him. Friend Judas!

Judas — Who calls?

Dathan — A friend. Has something sad happened to thee? Thou art so deep in thought.

Judas — Who art thou?

Dathan — Thy friend, thy brother.

Judas — Thou?

Dathan — At least I wish to become so. How is it with the Master? I also might enter His Society.

Judas — His Society? . . .

Dathan — Hast thou perchance left Him? Is it ill with Him? Tell me, that I may rule myself accordingly.

Judas — If thou canst be silent —

Dathan — Be assured of it.

Judas — Things no longer go well with Him. He says it

Himself, that His last hour is come. I will leave Him. I have charge of the bag — look and see how things are here.

Dathan — Friend, then I remain as I am.

SCENE V.

DATHAN'S COMPANIONS *steal in.*

Judas — Who are these? I will say no more.

Traders — Stay, friend, you will not rue it.

Judas — Wherefore have ye come hither?

Traders — We desire to return to Jerusalem and bear thee company, if it please thee.

Judas — Will ye perchance go after the Master?

Traders — Has He gone to Jerusalem?

Judas — For the last time, as He says.

Traders — Will He then leave Judæa?

Judas — Why ask ye so eagerly? Will ye become His followers?

Traders — Wherefore not, if favorable prospects are in that quarter?

Judas — I see nothing of that sort. He ever says to us, take no thought for the morrow — but if to-day any mischance befall Him there, we are all beggars. Doth a master care thus for his own?

Traders — Truly the outlook is bad enough.

Judas [*relates the story of the ointment*].

Traders — And thou canst yet be friends with Him? Thou oughtest to take thought for thine own future, were it only now.

Judas — I am thinking of it even now. But how to find a good livelihood at once?

Dathan — Thou needst not long seek that: the fairest opportunity offers itself.

Judas — Where — how?

Traders — Hast thou heard nothing of the proclamation of the High Priest's Council? A fairer opportunity thou wilt not in thy whole life again find.

Judas — What proclamation?

Traders — Whosoever informs concerning the nightly resort of Jesus of Nazareth will receive a large reward.

Judas — A large reward!

Traders — Who can deserve it easier than thou?

Dathan [aside] — We are near our aim.

Traders — Brother, trifle not with thy fortune.

Judas [aside] — A fair opportunity— shall I let it slip from my hands?

Dathan — And consider: the reward is not all. The Council will take further thought for thee. Who knows what thou mayest become?

Traders — Make up your mind, friend!

Judas — Well, so be it!

Dathan — Come, Judas, we will bring thee at once to the Council.

Judas — Just now I must go after the Master. I will first get information, in order to act more securely. Report me beforehand to the Council. In three hours you will find me in the street of the Temple.

Dathan — Brother, one word —

Judas — A man!

[*Exeunt the TRADERS.*]

SCENE VI.

Judas [alone] — My word is given. I shall not rue it. Shall I, forsooth, go out of the way of this approaching good fortune? Yes, my future is made. I will do what I have promised; let me, however, reckon things up beforehand. If the Priest succeed in taking Him prisoner, then shall I have brought my net to land, and shall besides become famous, as one who has helped to save the law of Moses. But if the Master conquers . . . then will I cast myself repentant at His feet. He is indeed good: never have I seen him cast a penitent away from Him. He will receive me again, and then I shall have the merit of having brought things to a decision. Judas, thou art a prudent man . . . yet I am afraid to come before the Master. I shall not be able to bear His piercing glance, and my companions will see in my face that I am a — No! that I will not be, I am no traitor! What am I doing except showing the Jews where the Master is to be found? That is no betrayal; more is needed for that. Away with these fancies! Courage, Judas, thy livelihood is at stake!

ACT V.

The Last Supper.

PROLOGUE.

Before the Divine Friend, constrained by love, departs to His Passion, He gives Himself to His own as Food of the soul during their earthly pilgrimage. Ready to offer Himself, He consecrates a sacrificial Banquet, which, through a thousand years and on to the close of time, shall proclaim His love to rescued humanity. Once with manna in the wilderness the Lord mercifully satisfied the children of Israel, and made glad their hearts with clusters of grapes from Canaan. But a better Feast, from Heaven itself, doth Jesus offer us. From the mystery of His Body and Blood flow grace and blessedness to us.

Chorus—

The hour now draweth near,
 Fulfillment now begins
 Of all which by His seers
 God to mankind made known.

“In this folk,” saith the Lord,
 “Have I no pleasure more,
 And sacrifice will I
 No more from them receive.

“A new feast I establish,”
 Thus saith the Lord; “and it shall be
 Throughout the world’s great circle
 An offering of this covenant.”

First Tableau: The Manna in the Wilderness.

Chorus—

The miracle in the desert Sin
 Points to the second covenant’s Feast.
 Good is the Lord, the Lord is good!
 He satisfies the hungry souls
 With a new Food
 In wondrous wise.

But death all those hath swept away,
 Who in the wilderness of Sin
 Did eat in fullness of that bread;

The second covenant's holy Bread
 Spirit and soul preserves from death
 When worthily enjoyed.

Second Tableau: The Grapes brought by the Spies from Canaan.

Chorus —

Good is the Lord, the Lord is good!
 Once hath He to His people
 The best juice of the vine
 Given from Canaan's land.

Yet this, the growth of Nature
 For needs of body only,
 By God's Will was designed.
 The second cov'nant's holy Wine
 Will be itself the Son's own blood —
 Thirst of the soul to quench.

The Lord is good, the Lord is good!
 In the new covenant He gives
 His Flesh and Blood at that high Feast
 In Salem's upper room.

SCENE I.

The upper chamber. CHRIST and the TWELVE at the table.

Christ — With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. Father, I thank Thee for this fruit of the vine. [*He drinks and gives the cup to the DISCIPLES.*] Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God shall come.

Apostles — Alas! Lord, is this, then, the last Passover?

Christ — There is a cup which I will drink with you in the kingdom of God, as it is written: Thou shalt make them drink of the river of Thy pleasures.

Peter — Master, when this kingdom shall appear, how then shall the places be portioned out?

James the Great — Which of us shall have the first place?

Christ — So long a time have I been with you, and ye are yet entangled in that which is of the earth! Verily, I appoint unto you which have continued with me in my temptations a

kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink with me at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. But consider well: the kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But it shall not be so among you; but he that is greatest among you let him be as the younger, and he that is chief as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at meat? But I am among you as he that serveth. [*He lays aside His garment, girds himself with a white towel, and pours water into a basin.*] Now sit down, beloved disciples!

Apostles — What will He do?

Christ — Peter, give me thy foot!

Peter — Lord, dost Thou wash my feet!

Christ — What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

Peter — Lord, thou shalt never wash my feet!

Christ — If I wash thee not thou hast no part with me.

Peter — Lord, if it be so, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

Christ — He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit. [*He washes all the DISCIPLES' feet. After He has taken His garment again He stands looking round upon the circle.*] Ye are now clean — but not all! [*He sits down.*] Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord; and ye say well, for so I am. If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet! For I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. [*He stands up.*] Children! but for a little while longer shall I be with you. That my remembrance may never perish from amongst you I will leave you an everlasting memorial, and so ever dwell with you and amongst you. The old covenant which my Father made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob hath reached its end. And I say unto you: a new covenant begins, which I solemnly consecrate to-day in my blood, as the Father hath given the commandment — and this covenant will last till all be fulfilled. [*He takes bread, blesses, and breaks it.*] Take, eat; this is my Body, which is given for you. [*He gives a small portion to each*

of the DISCIPLES.] This do in remembrance of me. [*He takes the cup with wine and blesses it.*] Take this, and drink ye all of it; for this is the cup of the New Testament in my Blood, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins. [*He gives the cup to all.*] As often as ye do this, do it in remembrance of me. [*He sits down.*]

John — Dearest Master, never will I forget Thy love! Thou knowest that I love Thee! [*He leans on JESUS' breast.*]

Apostles — O most loving One, ever will we remain united to Thee!

Peter — This holy supper of the new covenant shall ever be set forth amongst us according to Thine ordinance.

All — Most beloved Teacher!

Christ — My children, abide in me, and I in you. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you. Continue ye in my love. But, alas — must I say it? — the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table!

Several Apostles — What! — a betrayer amongst us?

Peter — Is it possible?

Christ — Verily, verily, I say unto you, one of you shall betray me!

Andrew — Lord, one of us twelve?

Christ — Yea, one of the twelve! One who dippeth his hand with me in the dish shall betray me. The Scripture will be fulfilled: he that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.

Thomas and Simon — Who shall this faithless one be?

The two Jameses — Name him openly, the infamous one!

Judas — Lord, is it I?

Thaddeus — Rather my life for Thee than such an act!

Christ [*to JUDAS*] — Thou hast said. [*To ALL.*] The Son of man indeed goeth as it is written of Him; but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! Good were it for that man if he had never been born!

Peter [*whispers to JOHN*] — Who is it of whom He speaks?

John [*whispers to JESUS*] — Lord, who is it?

Christ [*whispers to JOHN*] — He it is to whom I shall give a sop when I have dipped it.

Several Apostles — Who can it then be?

Christ [*after He has given the sop to JUDAS*] — That thou doest, do quickly.

[*JUDAS hastens out of the room.*]

Thomas [to *SIMON*] — Wherefore goeth Judas away?

Simon — Probably the Master sends him to buy somewhat.

Thaddeus — Or to give alms to the poor.

SCENE II.

Christ — Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God be glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and shall straightway glorify Him. Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me; and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.

Peter — Lord, whither goest Thou?

Christ — Whither I go thou canst not follow me now.

Peter — Why cannot I follow Thee now? I will lay down my life for Thy sake.

Christ — Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Simon, Simon! Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. All ye shall be offended because of me this night, for it is written: I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.

Peter — Although all shall be offended, yet will not I. Lord, I am ready to go with Thee both into prison and to death.

Christ — Verily, verily, I tell thee, Peter, that this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.

Peter — If I should die with Thee I will not deny Thee in any wise.

All — Master, we also will remain ever true to Thee! None of us will at any time deny Thee.

Christ — When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything?

All — No! Nothing.

Christ — But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip; and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one. For the time of trial is beginning, and I say unto you that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me: and He was reckoned among the transgressors.

Peter and Philip — Lord, behold here are two swords.

Christ — It is enough. Let us stand up and say the prayer of thanksgiving. [*With the DISCIPLES.*] Praise the Lord, all ye people! Praise Him, all ye nations! For His merciful kindness is ever more and more towards us, and the truth of the Lord endureth forever! [*He advances to the foreground and stands there awhile with His eyes raised to heaven. The APOSTLES stand on either side sorrowful and gazing at Him.*] Children, why are ye so sad, and why look ye on me so sorrowfully? Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; I go to prepare a place for you, and I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there you may be also. I leave you not as orphans. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth give I unto you. Keep my commandment! This is my commandment: That ye love one another as I have loved you. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. Hereafter I will not talk much with you, for the Prince of this world cometh, although he hath nothing in me. But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave the commandment, even so I do. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT VI.

The Betrayal.

PROLOGUE.

Alas, the false friend joins himself to the open enemies, and a few pieces of silver destroy all love and truth in the heart of the fool! Remorseless, this most thankless one departs, to conclude a shameful bargaining in life; the best of Teachers is put up to sale by him for a contemptible traitor's reward. The like disposition hardened Jacob's sons so that they pitilessly sold their own brother for an accursed price to strange usurers. Where the heart worships the idol of gold, there all nobler dispositions are killed; honor and man's word and love and friendship become salable.

Chorus —

What shudders run through all my limbs!
Where go'st thou, Judas, full of rage?
Art thou the villain, who the Blood
Wilt sell? Just Vengeance, tarry not —

Ye thunders — lightnings cast him down —
Crush, rend this wretch in pieces.

“One amongst you shall Me betray!”
Three times this word the Master spake.
By greed seduced to blackest deed
One from the Supper quickly went;
And this one — O thou holy God! —
Is Judas, the Iscariot.

O Judas, Judas! what a crime!
Complete not, oh, that darkest deed!
But no — by greed made deaf and blind,
To the Sanhedrim Judas hastes;
With wicked heart he now repeats
What once was done in Dothan’s field.

Tableau: JOSEPH sold by his Brethren to the Ishmaelites.

Chorus —

“What will ye offer for the lad? —
Answer us, brothers, — if we now
Deliver him for gold?”
They quickly give for the poor gain
Of twenty silver pieces told,
Their brother’s blood and life.

“What give ye? how reward ye me?”
The Iscariot says, “If I
My Lord betray to you?”
For thirty silver coins he makes
The bloody bargain: — Jesus is
To the Sanhedrim sold.

What this sad scene to us sets forth
Of this world is an image true.
How often have ye by your deeds
Your God e’en thus betrayed and sold?
On Joseph’s brethren ye pour
Curses, and on th’ Iscariot,
And yet in the same paths ye tread;
For envy, greed, and brother’s hate
Unceasingly exterminate
Man’s peace and joy and blessedness.

SCENE I.

The Sanhedrim.

Caiaphas — Assembled Fathers, I have joyful news to impart to you. The supposed Prophet of Galilee will soon, we hope, be in our hands. Dathan, the zealous Israelite, has won over one of the most trusted followers of the Galilæan, who consents to be employed as guide for the night attack. Both are ready here, and only await our summons. [*He sends a Priest to bring in DATHAN and JUDAS.*] Now, however, I must take your advice as to the price which should be given for the deed.

Nathanael — The law of Moses instructs us concerning it. A slave is reckoned at thirty pieces of silver.

A Priest — Yes, yes, such a price for a slave is the worth of the false Messiah.

SCENE II.

DATHAN and JUDAS before the Sanhedrim.

Dathan — Most learned Council, here is the man who is determined for a suitable reward to deliver your and our enemy.

Caiaphas [*to JUDAS*] — Knowest thou the man whom the Council seeks?

Judas — I have been in His company now for a long time and know Him; and I know where He is wont to abide.

Caiaphas — What is thy name?

Judas — I am called JUDAS, and am one of the Twelve.

Priests — Yes, yes, we often saw thee with Him.

Caiaphas — Art thou now steadfastly resolved to do after our will?

Judas — Thereto I give thee my word.

Caiaphas — Wilt thou not repent of it?

Judas — The friendship between Him and me has for some time cooled, and now I have quite broken with Him.

Caiaphas — What has prompted thee to this?

Judas — It is no longer with Him — and — I am resolved to submit myself to lawful authority; that is always the best. What will ye give me if I deliver Him unto you?

Caiaphas — Thirty pieces of silver, and they shall at once be counted out to thee.

Dathan — Hearken, Judas, thirty pieces of silver ! What a gain !

Nathanael — And observe also, Judas, that is not all. If thou carriest out thy work well, thou wilt be further cared for.

Priest — Thou mayest yet become a rich and illustrious man.

Judas — I am content. [*Aside.*] Now is my fortune made !

Caiaphas — Rabbi, bring the thirty pieces of silver out of the treasury, and reckon them in the presence of the Council. Is this as ye will ?

Priests — Yea, it is so.

Nicodemus — How can ye conclude such a godless bargain ? [*To JUDAS.*] And thou, vile creature, thou blushest not to sell thy Lord and Master, O forgetful of God — traitor, whom the earth shall swallow up ! Is thy most loving Friend and Benefactor to be sold by thee for thirty pieces of silver ?

Priests — Trouble not thyself, Judas, about the speech of this zealot. Let him be a disciple of the false Prophet ; thou dost thy duty as a disciple of Moses whilst thou servest the rightful authorities.

Rabbi [*enters with the money*] — Come, Judas, take the thirty pieces of silver, and be a man ! [*He reckons them to him on a small stone table, so that they fall with a sharp sound ; JUDAS sweeps them eagerly into his bag.*]

Judas — Ye may depend upon my word.

Priests — But, besides, thou must carry out the work before the Feast.

Judas — Even now the fairest opportunity presents itself. Even in this night He will be in your hands. Give me armed men, that He may be duly surrounded.

Annas — Let us go forthwith, with the watch of the Temple.

Priests — Yea, yea, let us order them off.

Caiaphas — It would also be advisable to send some members of the holy Sanhedrim.

Priests — We are ready.

[*CAIAPHAS chooses out FOUR DEPUTIES.*]

Caiaphas — But, Judas, how will the band know the Master in the darkness of the night ?

Judas — They must come with torches and lanterns, and I will give them a sign.

Priests — Excellent, Judas !

Judas — Now I will hasten away to spy out everything. Then I will return to fetch the armed men.

Dathan — I will go with thee, Judas, and not leave thy side till thy work is accomplished.

Judas — At the gate of Bethphage I await your men.

[*Exeunt JUDAS, DATHAN, and the FOUR DEPUTIES.*]

SCENE III.

The Sanhedrim.

Caiaphas — All goes on admirably, venerable fathers. But now our business is to look the great question in the face. What is to happen to this Man when God shall have given Him into our hands?

Priests — Let Him be buried alive in the deepest dungeon.

Caiaphas — Which of you will warrant that, in the tumult of an insurrection raised by them, His friends do not set Him free or bribe the guards? Or might He not, through His wicked magic, break His bonds? [*The PRIESTS are silent.*] I see well that ye know of no resource. Listen, then, to the High Priest. It is better that one man die, and that the whole nation perish not. He must DIE! Until He be dead there is no peace for Israel! No security for the law of Moses, no quiet hours for us.

Rabbi — God has spoken through His High Priest! through His death alone the people of Israel can and must be saved!

Nathanael — The word has long been upon my lips. Now is it spoken. Let Him die, the foe of our fathers!

Priests [one to another] — Yea, let Him die! In His death is our salvation.

Annas — By my gray hairs I swear I will not rest until our shame be effaced in the blood of this Seducer!

Nicodemus — So judgment is pronounced upon this Man before He Himself be heard, before any trial, or any hearing of witnesses has taken place? Is this a transaction worthy of the fathers of the people of Israel?

Priests — What need is there here of inquiry or of witnesses? Have we not ourselves been witnesses of his words and deeds against the law?

Nicodemus — Ye are in yourselves accusers, witnesses, and judges. I have listened to His lofty teaching, I have seen His

mighty works. They call for faith and for admiration, not for contempt and punishment.

Caiaphas — What, the wicked wretch deserves admiration ! Thou wilt cleave to Moses, and yet defend that which condemns Moses ?

Priests — Away with thee out of our assembly !

Joseph of Arimathea — I must agree with Nicodemus. No action has been imputed to Jesus of Nazareth which makes Him guilty of death. He has done nothing save good.

Caiaphas — Speakest thou also thus ? Is it not everywhere known how He has violated the Sabbath, and how He has seduced the people with seditious words ? Hath He not, as a Deceiver, wrought His pretended miracles through Beelzebub ? Hath He not given Himself out as God ?

Priests — Dost thou hear ?

Joseph of Arimathea — Envy and malice have distorted His words and imputed evil motives to His noblest actions. And that He is God His divine works make manifest.

Nathanael — Ha, thou art known ! For a long time already thou hast been a secret adherent of this Galilæan. Now hast thou fully revealed thyself.

Annas — So we have even in our midst a traitor to the holy laws, and even hither hath a seducer cast his nets ?

Caiaphas — What doest thou here, thou rebel ? Go after thy Prophet to see Him once more before His hour strike, for He must die ! That is unalterably resolved.

Priests — Yea, He must die, that is our resolve !

Nicodemus — I execrate this resolution. I will have no part in this shameful and bloody judgment.

Joseph of Arimathea — I also will shun the spot where innocence is murdered. [Exeunt NICODEMUS and JOSEPH.

SCENE IV.

The Sanhedrim.

Priests — At length we are quit of those traitors ; we can now speak out freely.

Caiaphas — It will above all be necessary that we should sit formally in judgment upon this man, hear Him, and bring witnesses against Him ; otherwise the people will believe that we have only prosecuted Him out of envy and hatred.

Priest — Witnesses will not be wanting : I will provide them.

Pharisee — Our sentence stands. But in order that the weak do not take offense we will observe the forms of justice.

Second Pharisee — If these forms be not sufficient, then will the strength of our will supply the want.

Rabbi — A little more or less guilty is of small importance. The public welfare requires His immediate death.

Caiaphas — As to what further belongs to the execution of the judgment, it would be best if we could obtain our end through the Governor, so that *he* should condemn Him to death. Then we should be without responsibility.

Nathanael — We can attempt it. If it does not succeed it still remains open to us to cause our judgment to be carried out by our trusty agents in the tumult of an insurrection of the people, without openly taking part in it ourselves.

Rabbi — And in the last resort a hand will easily be found which in the stillness of the dungeon will deliver the holy Sanhedrim from its Enemy.

Caiaphas — Circumstances will teach us what must be done. For the present let us break up. But hold yourselves ready at every hour of the night. I may have you called. There is no time to lose. Our resolve is, He must die !

All [tumultuously] — Let Him die, the enemy of our holy law !

ACT VII.

JESUS in the Garden of Gethsemane.

PROLOGUE.

As Adam strives with bitter heart-weariness, exhausted in strength, in the sweat of his face, in order, alas ! to expiate his own guilt, so does the guilt of mankind press upon the Redeemer. Overwhelmed by an ocean of sadness, His head bowed to earth with a heavy burden, running down with the bloody sweat of anguish, He wages the hottest fight in the olive-garden. Already the faithless disciple, 'Iscaiot, draws near, as leader of the band of men, using shamefully the seal of love as the token of betrayal. Thus basely, also, Joab dealt with Amasa ; he presses at the same time, with hypocritical mien, the kiss of friendship upon his lips, and in his heart, alas ! the dagger's point.

Chorus—

Judas, lo, ate hallowed Bread
At the Sacrament,
With unhallowed conscience—
Satan quickly to him entered—
“That thou doest,” spake the Master,
“Judas!—see thou do it quickly.”

From the guest-room went he out,
Hastened to the Synagogue,
And his Master there he sold.

Soon completed—soon is ended
The most horrible of deeds.
Alas! to-day, e'en in this night,
Judas his Master will betray.
O come ye all—come then, O come—
Behold with us the Sufferings.

In shadow first—and soon in light
Appeareth now
The mournfullest of histories,
Gethsemane!

First Tableau: ADAM and EVE laboring.

O what labor, O what heat
Must not Father Adam bear!
Ah! a stream of sweat runs down
Over brow and countenance.
This is the fruit of sin.
God's curse oppresseth Nature,
Therefore yields she for hard sweat
And for toilsome industry
Only sparingly her fruits.

Thus so hard it is to Jesu
(When 'mid olive shades He strives)
That a stream of bloody sweat
From each holy limb is forced.
This is the strife of sin;
In His own Blood combats He—
Trembles—reels—yet with high heart
Drinks the cup of suffering.

*Second Tableau: The Murder of AMASA by JOAB.**Chorus —*

The scene near Gibeon's rocks —

Judas repeateth — Simon's son.

Ye rocks of Gibeon!

Why stand ye thus unhonored —

Ye, late the land's proud boast —

As though with mourning veil wrapt round?

Say, I adjure thee, say — what deed was done?

What deed was done?

Fly, wanderer, with speed fly hence!

Accursed be this blood-stained spot!

Pierced by assassin's hand here fell

One Amasa,

In holy friendship's greeting trusting,

By Joab's false brother-kiss deceived.

With one voice cry with us, — Curse on thee!

The rocks complain of thee,

The blood-soaked earth takes vengeance.

Be silent, rocks of Gibeon! — Silent your voice,

And hear, and split yourselves with rage,

Ye rocks of Gibeon!

So betrays the Son of man,

Ah, with hypocrite's vile greeting,

And with false deceiving kiss,

As the leader of a band,

Judas the Iscariot.

Ye rocks of Gibeon!

Receive our oath,

And this monster of all Nature curse!

All Earth's circle curseth him,

Open thine abyss, O Earth!

Swallow him! — and let hell-fire

Consume this monster dire!

SCENE I.

A road near the Mount of Olives. JUDAS and the FOUR DEPUTIES of the Sanhedrim. The TRADERS. SELPHA, the leader of the Band. MALCHUS. A BAND OF MEN.

Judas — Now, be watchful. We are nearing the place whither the Master has withdrawn Himself, in order to pass the still night in this lonely region. Resistance need not be thought of, the surprise is too unexpected.

Soldier — Should they venture it, they will feel the strength of our arms.

Judas — Do not fear it. He will fall into your hands without a sword's stroke.

Traders — But how shall we know the Master in the darkness?

Judas — I will give you this as a sign. When we are in the garden — give heed — I will hasten to Him. Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is He. Hold Him fast.

Priest — Good. This sign makes us go on more securely. Do ye hear? By the kiss ye shall know the Master.

Soldiers — We will give heed enough.

Judas — Now let us hasten. It is time. We are now not far from the garden.

Pharisee — Judas, if to-night brings us this happy chance, thy action will bring thee forth most excellent fruit.

Traders — From us also thou shalt receive a handsome recompense.

Soldiers — Come, now, Thou stirrer up of the people! Now shalt Thou receive Thy reward. [*Exeunt omnes.*]

SCENE II.

The Garden of Olives: CHRIST and the DISCIPLES advance together out of the background.

Christ — Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. For I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again I leave the world, and go to the Father.

Peter — Lo, now speakest Thou plainly, and speaketh no proverb.

James the Great — Now are we sure that Thou knowest all things.

Thomas — By this we believe that Thou camest forth from God. . .

Christ — Do ye now believe? Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. Yea, Father, the hour is come! Glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee. I have finished

the work which Thou gavest me to do; I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest me out of the world. Holy Father, keep them through Thine own name. Sanctify them in the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee. Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which Thou hast given me; for Thou lovest me before the foundation of the world. [*To the DISCIPLES, entering the garden in visible sadness.*] Children, sit ye here while I go and pray yonder. Pray that ye enter not into temptation. But ye, Peter, James, and John, follow me.

[*He goes forward with the THREE APOSTLES.*

Disciples [*in the background*] — What has happened to our Master? We never yet saw Him so sorrowful. Not in vain has the Master prepared us for it beforehand.

Christ [*in the foreground*] — O beloved children! my soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here and watch with me. [*After a pause.*] I will go a little farther, in order to strengthen myself by communion with my Father. [*He goes to a rocky place with slow and tottering steps.*]

Peter [*gazes after Him*] — O most good and dear Master!

John — My soul suffers with the soul of our Teacher.

[*They sit down.*

Peter — I am full of fear! We were witnesses of His transfiguration on the mount. But now — what must we see?

Christ [*near the rocky ground*] — This hour must come upon me — the hour of darkness. But for this hour came I into the world. [*He falls upon His knees.*] Father! my Father! if it be possible — and all things are possible unto Thee — let this cup pass from me! [*He falls upon His face and remains so for a while, then again kneels.*] Yet, Father, not as I will, but as Thou wilt! [*He stands up, looks up to heaven, then goes to the THREE DISCIPLES.*] Simon!

Peter [*as in a dream*] — Alas, my Master!

Christ — Simon, sleepest thou?

Peter — Master, here am I!

Christ — Could ye not watch with me one hour?

Apostles — Rabbi, sleep has overmastered us.

Christ — Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.

Apostles — Yea, Master, we will pray and watch.

Christ — The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. [*He returns to the rocky ground.*] My Father, Thy demand is righteous, Thy counsels are holy, Thou claimest this sacrifice! [*He falls upon His knees.*] Father! the struggle is fierce. [*He falls upon His face, then raises Himself.*] Yet if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, my Father, Thy will be done. [*He stands up.*] Most Holy! in holiness shall it be accomplished by me! [*He returns to the sleeping DISCIPLES.*] Are then your eyes so heavy that ye could not watch? O my most trusted ones! even among you I find none to comfort me! [*He goes towards the rocky ground, then pauses.*] Ah! how dark all around me becomes! The sorrows of death take hold upon me! The burden of divine justice lies upon me! O sinners! O sins of mankind! ye weigh me down! O fearful burden! O the bitterness of this cup! [*He comes to the rocky ground.*] My Father! [*He kneels.*] If it be not possible that these sins pass away from me, Thy will be done! Thy most holy will! Father! — Thy Son! — Hear Him!

SCENE III.

An ANGEL appears.

Angel — Son of man, sanctify the Father's will! Consider the blessedness which shall proceed from Thy struggle! The Father has laid upon Thee, and Thou hast of Thy free will taken upon Thee, to become the offering for sinful humanity: carry it through! The Father will glorify Thee.

Christ — Yea, most holy Father, I adore Thy providence, I will accomplish it — accomplish it! To reconcile, to save, to bring blessedness! [*He rises.*] Strengthened through Thy word, O Father, I go joyfully to meet that to which Thou hast called me, the substitute for sinful man! [*To the THREE DISCIPLES.*] Sleep on now and take your rest.

Peter — What is it, Master?

The Three Apostles — Behold, we are ready!

Christ — The hour is come. The Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going.

Disciples — What tumult is that?

Philip — Come, let us gather around the Master.

[*The DISCIPLES hasten forward.*]

Christ — Lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand.

[*JUDAS appears with the Band.*]

Andrew — What does this multitude want?

All — Ah, all is over with us!

John — And see, Judas is at their head!

SCENE IV.

Judas — Hail, Master! [*He kisses JESUS.*]

Christ — Friend, wherefore art thou come? Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss? [*He goes towards the BAND OF MEN.*] Whom seek ye?

Soldiers — Jesus of Nazareth.

Christ — I am He.

Soldiers — Woe unto us! What is this? [*They fall to the ground.*]

Disciples — A single word from Him casts them to the ground!

Christ [*to the MEN*] — Fear not, arise!

Disciples — Lord, cast them down that they rise not up again.

Christ — Whom seek ye?

Band of Men — Jesus of Nazareth.

Christ — I have told you that I am He. If, therefore, ye seek me, let these go their way.

Selpha — Seize Him! [*The servants approach JESUS.*]

Peter and Philip — Lord, shall we smite with the sword?

[*PETER strikes MALCHUS.*]

Malchus — Alas! I am wounded, mine ear is cut off!

Christ [*to the DISCIPLES*] — Suffer ye thus far. [*To MALCHUS.*] Be not troubled, thou shalt be healed. [*He touches MALCHUS' ear. Then to PETER.*] Put up thy sword into the sheath; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be? [*To the PHARISEES.*] Are ye come out, as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the Temple and ye stretched forth no hands against me, and took me not. But this is your hour and the power of darkness. Behold, I am here!

Selpha — Take Him, and bind Him fast, that He escape not.

Nathanael — You are responsible for it to the Sanhedrim.

[*The DISCIPLES forsake Him.*]

Band of Men — Out of our hands He escapes not.

Traders — Now will we cool our revenge.

Nathanael — First go we to Annas, the High Priest. Lead Him thither.

Trader [*to JUDAS*] — Judas, thou art a man! Thou knowest how to keep thy word.

Judas — Said I not to you that to-night He should be in your power?

Pharisee — Thou hast laid the whole Sanhedrim under obligation to thee.

Band of Men [*driving JESUS before them*] — On with Thee! At Jerusalem they will decide about Thee.

Selpha — Let us hasten; lead him away safely.

Band of Men — Ha! run now, as Thou hast run about the land of Judæa.

Selpha — Spare Him not! Urge Him on.

Band of Men — Forward, otherwise Thou shalt be driven with sticks!

Traders — Doth Beelzebub then aid Thee no longer?

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

SCENE V.

PETER and JOHN coming out of their hiding-place.

Peter — Alas, they have taken Him away, our good Master, John! [*Weeps upon his bosom.*] That which is incredible comes to pass.

John — O Friend, O best of Teachers! Is this then Thine end? Is this then the thanks for the goodness of which Thou hast been the author? The Benefactor of the people, the Friend of humanity, in chains!

Peter — John, I will go after our Master. I must see Him yet again. Whither have they dragged Him off?

John — Didst thou not hear? — to Annas. Come, we will go together.

[*Exeunt.*]

PART II.

FROM THE ARREST IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE TO THE
CONDEMNATION UNDER PILATE.

ACT VIII.

JESUS *before* ANNAS.

PROLOGUE.

O fearful night! Behold the Redeemer! He is dragged from tribunal to tribunal, and everywhere encounters injury and ill treatment. A wretch repays Him for a sincere word, spoken to Annas, — strikes Him with rough hand on His blessed face in order to gain praise for himself. Such shameful reward was also the reward of Micaiah, when he revealed the truth to King Ahab; one of the lying prophets struck him on the cheek. Truth earns only hate and persecution; yet, though its light may be avoided and banished, at last it will conquer, and break through the darkness!

Chorus —

Pain's battle dread has now begun —

Begun Gethsemane.

O sinners! lay it to your hearts,

And ne'er forget this scene.

For your salvation, that befell

Which now we saw 'mid olive shades.

Sorrowful even unto death,

For you He sank upon the ground;

For you the sweat as blood was forced

From every agonized limb.

Pain's battle dread, etc.

*Tableau: The Prophet MICAIAH before KING AHAB smitten
on the Cheek.*

Chorus —

Who boldly speaks the truth

Is smitten in the face.

Micaiah dared to speak the truth,

And on the cheek was struck.

* O King, thou wilt be conquered
Should Ramoth fight with thee : ”
These words Micaiah spoke.

“ Then to save thyself from mishap,
Of Baal’s prophets trust not, King,
Falsehoods — flattering though they be.”

But Micaiah’s truthful message
Flatters not King Ahab’s soul ;
And the liar, Zedekiah,
Strikes him for it in the face.

Liars, flatt’ers, hypocrites,
Roses, laurels pluck with ease !
Truth alone must needs stoop low,
For truth never flatters men.

Jesus (touching His high teaching
And His works) to hear, the right
Annas to himself assumes.
“ Wouldst thou know what I have taught,
Ask of those who heard my words,”
This will Jesu’s answer be.

But the truthful words he hears
Flatter not the soul of Annas ;
Innocence receives a blow —
Jesus in the face is smitten.

SCENE I.

The High Priest ANNAS with three PRIESTS on the balcony of his house.

Annas — I can find no rest this night until I know that this agitator is in our hands. Full of longing I await my trusty servants with the news that the enemy of the Sanhedrim is already in fetters.

Priests — They cannot long delay ; it is a long time since they broke up.

Annas — In vain has my troubled gaze been fixed over and over upon the street of Kedron. [*The PRIESTS try to tranquillize ANNAS, and two of them go out in different directions to see if the band of men be near; one hastens towards the Kedron*

gate and one towards the Siloa gate. At last one PRIEST returns and announces that all has gone well.]

Annas — Auspicious message, happy hour ! A stone is taken from off my heart, and I feel as though new-born. Now, for the first time, I call myself with joy High Priest of the chosen people !

SCENE II.

The FOUR DEPUTIES of the Sanhedrim appear with JUDAS upon the balcony.

The Four Pharisees — Long live our High Priest !

Nathanael — The wish of the Sanhedrim is fulfilled !

Annas — Oh, I must embrace you for joy ! Judas, thy name will take an honorable place in our records of the year. Even before the feast shall the Galilæan die !

Judas [terrified] — Die ?

Annas — His death is resolved upon.

Judas — I will not be responsible for His life and for His blood.

Annas — That is not necessary : He is in our power.

Judas — I did not deliver Him to you for that end.

Pharisee — Thou hast delivered Him, the rest is our business.

Judas — Woe is me ! What have I done ? Shall He die ? No ! I did not desire that. I will not have it ! [*He hastens away.*]

Pharisee [jeering at him] — Thou mayest wish it or not, but He must die.

SCENE III.

The same without JUDAS. Directly after, enter upon the balcony CHRIST, SELPHA, the leader of the Band and the Temple Guard, SERVANTS, MALCHUS, and BALBUS. The Band remains underneath.

Priest — High Priest, the Prisoner is on the threshold.

Annas — Let Him be brought before me.

SELPHA appears with CHRIST.

Annas — Have ye brought Him alone prisoner ?

Balbus — His followers dispersed themselves like frightened sheep.

Selpha — We found it not worth the trouble of apprehending them. Nevertheless Malchus nearly lost his life.

Annas — What happened ?

Selpha — One of His followers, with a drawn sword, smote him, and cut off his ear.

Annas — How ? But there is no mark of it.

Balbus [*mocking*] — The magician has conjured it back upon him again.

Annas — What sayest thou about it, Malchus ?

Malchus [*gravely*] — I cannot explain it. A wonderful thing has happened to me.

Annas — Has the Deceiver perchance also bewitched thee ?
[*To JESUS.*] Tell me, by what power hast Thou done this ?
[*CHRIST is silent.*]

Selpha — Speak, when Thy High Priest questions Thee !

Annas — Speak ! Give an account of Thy disciples, and of Thy teaching, which Thou hast spread abroad in the whole of Judæa, and with which Thou hast seduced the people.

Christ — I spake openly to the world ; I ever taught in the Synagogue and in the Temple, and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me ? Ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them : behold, they know what I said.

Balbus [*strikes JESUS*] — Answerest Thou the High Priest so ?

Christ — If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil ; but if well, why smitest thou me ?

Annas — Wilt Thou still defy us, when Thy life and death are in our power ? I am weary of this wicked wretch !

Balbus [*to CHRIST who is led away*] — Wait awhile, Thy obstinacy will give way.

Annas — I will betake myself for a while to repose, or rather to quiet reflection as to how that which is happily begun may be brought to an end. In any case I shall receive the summons to the Sanhedrim early in the morning. [*Exeunt omnes.*]

SCENE IV.

CHRIST in the midst of the BAND OF MEN.

Men [*to SELPHA, who leads JESUS*] — Ha ! is His business already over ?

Selpha — His defense went badly.

Balbus — It was, however, worth a good blow on the face to Him.

Selpha — Take Him now, and away with Him to the palace of Caiaphas.

Band of Men — Away with Him ! March !

Balbus — Be joyful ! from Caiaphas Thou wilt have a still better reception.

Band of Men — There will the ravens already sing about Thy ears.

SCENE V.

PETER and JOHN before the house of ANNAS.

Peter — How will it go with the dearest Master? O John, how sorrowful I am concerning Him !

John — Surely He will have had to suffer scorn and ill treatment here. I am very anxious to get near the house.

Peter — All around, however, is so quiet.

John — No noise is heard in the palace. Will they have led Him away again?

Priest [coming out] — What do you want here at the palace in the night-time?

John — Pardon, we saw from afar a crowd of people going here through the Kedron gate, and we went after them to see what had happened.

Priest — They brought a Prisoner, but He has already been sent to Caiaphas.

John — To Caiaphas? Then we will go away at once.

Priest — It will be as well for you, otherwise I would have you taken up as night brawlers.

Peter — We will raise no commotion and go away quietly.

[*Exeunt.*]

Priest [looking after them] — Are they perchance followers of the Galilæan? If I only knew ! However, they will not escape our people if they go to Caiaphas' palace. The whole following must be destroyed, otherwise the people will never be brought into subjection.

[*Exit.*]

ACT IX.

JESUS before CAIAPHAS.

PROLOGUE.

Before enraged enemies, now His judges, stands the Lord, veiled in silence. Patiently He hears all the accusations and lies, even the sentence of death. As once Naboth, though innocent, was persecuted

and condemned through false witness as a blasphemer of God, so also He whose only fault is — Truth, Love, Beneficence. Soon shall ye see Him surrounded by inhuman servants, given up as a mark to the brutality of scorn, spitefully entreated amidst wild laughter. In patient Job, laden with reproach even by his friends in his deepest trouble, ye see foreshadowed the heavenly meekness of the beloved Saviour.

Chorus —

How sore my heart doth bleed!
 'Fore judgment stands the Holiest.
 The crimes of sinners He must bear;
 Betrayed and scorned, smitten and bound.

Whose eyes will not be full of tears? —
 From Annas, dragged to Caiaphas —
 What must He suffer there, alas!
 See here in type this suff'ring fresh.

First Tableau: The Death of NABOTH.

“ Let Naboth die! To death with him!
 He hath blasphemed thee, O King!
 And God! — from Israel cast him out!”
 Thus foaming cry the sland'rous tongues,
 By Jezebel, the wicked Queen,
 Paid for their false and evil oath.

Alas! with death they vengeance take
 On that which Naboth ne'er had done;
 The vineyard then upon the King
 By wicked rogues is then bestowed.

Of this world 'tis an image true,
 So goes it often e'en to-day
 The poor and gentle lamb doth fall
 To the strong wolf an easy prey.

Ye mighty gods of this poor earth —
 For weal of men above them placed —
 Forget not, 'mid your duties' round,
 The invisible Judge of all.
 Before Him all the sons of men
 Are equal, be they poor or rich,
 Noble or born of beggar race;
 He cares for righteousness alone.

Second Tableau: The Affliction of JOB.

Behold the man! a skeleton,
 A fright — of nature loathsomeness! —
 To cheek and lips how fearfully
 Only the withered skin adheres!

Behold the man! the putrid wounds
 No whole part in his body leave.
 Corruption flows from every sore,
 And rottenness devours his bones.

Behold the man! A Job in pain,
 Ah, whom doth he not move to tears?
 His friends and e'en his wife make sport,
 Before him mocking at his woe.

Behold the man!
 Yet who may call him still a man?
 From head to foot his body now
 Despoiled of every grace is seen.

Behold the man!
 O eyes! weep warmest tears of grief.
 Ah, Jesu — *Thou* a man no more!
 The scorn and jest of men is He.

Behold the man!
 O all ye moved and grieved hearts!
 Ah Jesu, Jesu, Son of God,
 Becomes the scorn and jest of knaves
 Amid His endless strife of pain.

Behold the man!

SCENE I.

BAND OF MEN. CHRIST *led through the streets.*

Band of Men [making a noise] — Thou wilt become a spectacle — a spectacle to the whole nation!

Balbus — Hurry Thyself! Thy followers are quite ready. They wish to proclaim Thee King of Israel.

Band of Men — Thou hast often dreamed of it, hast Thou not?

Selpha — Caiaphas the High Priest will now interpret this dream for him.

Balbus — Hearest Thou? Caiaphas will announce to Thee Thy exaltation.

Band of Men [*with laughter*] — Yes, Thine exaltation between heaven and earth!

Selpha — Look out, ye fellows! There, through Pilate's tower, lies our nearest way to the castle of Caiaphas. Station yourselves there in the outer court until further action.

Band of Men — Thy orders shall be carried out. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

CAIAPHAS in his sleeping-chamber. *Enter* PRIESTS and PHARISEES.

Caiaphas — The happy beginning promises us speedy accomplishment of our wishes. I thank you, noble members of the Sanhedrim, for your zealous and prudent coöperation!

Priest — The highest thanks are due to our High Priest.

Caiaphas — Let us now pursue our path without delay! All is prepared beforehand. The Council will be immediately assembled, the necessary witnesses have been brought. I will now at once begin the trial of the Prisoner. Then judgment will be given and care taken for its execution. Trust me, my friends! I have conceived a plan for myself and hope to carry it out.

All — The God of our fathers bless every action of our High Priest!

SCENE III.

The BAND OF MEN bring in CHRIST. *The false WITNESSES.*

Selpha [*the leader of the Band*] — Venerable High Priest, here is the Prisoner.

Caiaphas — Bring Him nearer, that I may look Him in the face.

Selpha — Stand forth, and show respect here to the House of the Sanhedrim.

Caiaphas — Thou art then He who hadst the fancy to wish to bring about the downfall of our synagogue and of the law of Moses? Thou art accused of stirring up the people to disobedience, of despising the holy traditions of the fathers, of many

times transgressing the Divine command of keeping the Sabbath holy, and of many blasphemous words and deeds against God. There are here worthy men, who are ready to uphold the truth of these complaints with their witness. Listen to them, and then Thou mayest defend Thyself if Thou canst.

First Witness — I can testify before God that this man has stirred up the people, while He has openly denounced the members of the Council and the Scribes as hypocrites, raging wolves in sheep's clothing, blind leaders of the blind, and has said that no one is to follow them.

Second Witness — I also witness to this, and can add besides that He has forbidden the people to pay tribute to Cæsar.

First Witness — Yea, at least He has let fall ambiguous words concerning it.

Caiaphas — What sayest Thou to that? Thou art silent?

Third Witness — I have often seen how He with His disciples has, in defiance of the law, gone to table with unwashed hands, how He was wont to have friendly intercourse with publicans and sinners, and went into their houses to eat with them.

Other Witnesses — This we also have often seen.

Third Witness — I have heard from trustworthy people that He even spake with Samaritans, and indeed dwelt with them a whole day.

First Witness — I was also an eye-witness of how He did on the Sabbath what by God's law is forbidden, and fearlessly healed the sick. He has enticed others to break the Sabbath. And He has also commanded a man to carry his bed to his house.

Caiaphas — What hast Thou to reply to this evidence? Hast Thou nothing to answer to it?

Third Witness — Thou hast (I was present) taken upon Thyself to forgive sins, which belongs only to God. Thou hast also blasphemed God!

First Witness — Thou hast called God Thy Father, and hast dared to declare that Thou art One with the Father. Thou hast also made Thyself equal to God.

Second Witness — Thou hast exalted Thyself above our forefather Abraham: Thou didst say that before Abraham was Thou already art.

Fourth Witness — Thou hast said, "I am able to destroy the Temple of God and to build it in three days."

Fifth Witness — I have heard Thee say, "I will destroy this

Temple, which is made with hands, and within three days I will build another, made without hands."

Caiaphas — Thou hast then extolled Thyself as a superhuman Divine authority! These are heavy accusations, and they are witnessed according to the law. Answer, if Thou canst! Thou thinkest to be able to save Thyself through silence. Thou darest not to acknowledge before the fathers of the people that which Thou hast taught before the people. Or darest Thou? Hear then: I, the High Priest, adjure Thee by the living God! say, art Thou the Messiah, the Son of the most High God!

Christ — Thou hast said it, I am. Nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

Caiaphas — He hath blasphemed God! What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy! What think ye?

All — He is guilty of death!

Caiaphas — He has been unanimously declared guilty of death. Yet not I, and not the Sanhedrim, but the law of God itself declares the judgment of death upon Him. Ye teachers of the law, I require you to reply, what saith the holy law of him who is disobedient to the authority ordained of God?

First Priest [reads] — "The man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the priest that standeth to minister there before the Lord thy God, or unto the judge, even that man shall die: and thou shalt put away the evil from Israel."¹

Caiaphas — What doth the law ordain concerning him who profaneth the Sabbath?

Second Priest. [reads] — "Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore, for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from his people."²

Caiaphas — How doth the law punish a blasphemer?

Third Priest [reads] — "Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin. And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord he shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him, as well the stranger as he that is born in the land."³

Caiaphas — Thus is judgment declared upon this Jesus of

¹ Deut. xvii. 12.

² Ex. xxi. 14.

³ Lev. xxi. 15, 16.

Nazareth, declared according to the law, and it shall be carried out as soon as possible. Meanwhile I will have the Condemned safely kept. Lead Him away! Guard Him, and with the morning dawn bring Him to the great Sanhedrim.

Selpha — Come on then, Messiah! We will show Thee Thy palace.

Balbus — There Thou wilt receive due homage.

[*They lead Him away.*]

SCENE IV.

Caiaphas — We are near our end! Now, however, determined steps are necessary!

All — We will not rest till He be brought to death.

Caiaphas — With the break of day let us reassemble. Then shall the judgment be confirmed by the whole assembled Council, and the Prisoner shall be hereupon immediately brought before Pilate in order that he may enforce it, and so cause it to be carried out.

Priests — May God soon set us free from our Enemy!

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

SCENE V.

Judas — Fearful forebodings drive me hither and thither. That word in the house of Annas — He must die! Oh! that word pursues me everywhere! No! they will not carry it so far! It were horrible — and I — the guilt of it! Here in the house of Caiaphas I will inquire how matters stand. Shall I go in? I can no longer bear them, these uncertainties, and I am terrified of attaining certainty, but it must come some time! [*He goes in.*]

SCENE VI.

Night. *Hall in the house of CAIAPHAS. The maids SARAH and HAGAR, with a BAND OF MEN. The SERVANTS lie around a large brazier of coals. JOHN and PETER, later SELPHA, with CHRIST.*

Hagar [*to JOHN, who stands at the entrance*] — John, comest thou also hither in the middle of the night? Come in, then.

Here canst thou warm thyself. Will not ye, men, willingly make a little room for this young man?

Band of Men — Yea, truly, come in, then!

John — Good Hagar, there is yet a companion with me; might he not also come in?

Hagar — Where is he? Let him come in. Wherefore should he stand without in the cold? [*JOHN goes to PETER, who is standing at one side, but returns alone.*] Now, where is he?

John — He is standing on the threshold, but dares not come in.

Hagar — Come in, good friend, be not afraid.

Band of Men — Friend, come thou also here to us. Warm thyself. [*PETER timidly approaches the fire.*]

Servant — We still see and hear nothing of the Prisoner.

Band of Men — How much longer must we wait here?

Second Servant — Probably He will come from the audience as one condemned to death.

First Servant — I marvel if His disciples will not also be sought for.

Band of Men [*laughing*] — That were a fine piece of work, if they were all to be taken prisoners.

Second Servant — It would not be worth while. If the Master be once out of the way the Galilæans would take flight and no longer allow themselves to be seen in Jerusalem.

First Servant — But at least the one who in the garden took to his weapon and cut off Malchus' ear ought to receive sharp chastisement.

Band of Men — Yea, for it is said, "An ear for an ear!"

First Servant — Ha, ha, ha! but the rule does not apply here, for Malchus has got his ear back.

Hagar [*to PETER*] — I have been observing thee for some time. If I mistake not, thou art one of the disciples of the Galilæan? Yea, yea, thou art.

Peter — I? No—I am not. Woman, I know Him not, neither know I what thou sayest. [*He tries to slip away and passes near SARAH.*]

Sarah — Behold this fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth!

Several — Art thou also one of His disciples?

Peter — I am not, on my soul! I know not the man.

[*The cock crows.*]

Third Servant — Behold this man ! of a truth he also was with Him !

Peter — I know not what ye have to do with me. What is this man to me ?

Several — Surely thou art one of them, for thou art a Galilaean, and thy speech bewrayeth thee.

Peter — May God be my witness that I know not this man of whom ye speak ! [The cock crows the second time.]

Fourth Servant — What, did I not see thee in the garden with Him when my cousin Malchus had his ear struck off ?

Band of Men [at the fire] — Make yourselves ready, they are bringing in the Prisoner.

SELPHA appears with CHRIST.

Second Servant — Now, how have things gone ?

Selpha — He is condemned to death.

Band of Men [mocking] — Poor King !

[CHRIST looks sorrowfully upon PETER.]

Selpha — Onwards, comrades, until the morning dawn we must watch Him.

Second Servant — Come, He will beguile the time for us.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII.

Peter — Ah, dearest Master, how deeply have I fallen ! O weak, O wretched man ! Thee, my most loving Friend and Teacher, I have denied — three times have I denied Thee for whom I promised to die. Oh, I know not how I could so terribly have forgotten myself ! Accursed be my shameful betrayal ! May my heart be ever filled with sorrow for this despicable cowardice ! Lord, my dearest Lord, if Thou hast still grace left for me, grace for a faithless one, O grant it, grant it even to me ! even now hearken to the voice of my repentant heart. Alas, the sin has been committed ; I can nevermore undo it, but ever, ever will I weep and repent over it ; never, never more will I leave Thee ! O Thou most full of goodness, Thou wilt not cast me out ? Thou wilt not despise my bitter repentance ? No ; the gentle compassionate glance with which Thou didst look on me, thy deeply fallen disciple, assures me that Thou wilt forgive me. This hope I have in Thee, O best of Teachers. And the whole love of my heart shall from this moment belong to Thee, and keep me most closely united to Thee. Noth-

ing, nothing shall be able ever again to separate me from Thee! [Exit.

John — Where can Peter be gone? Hath any mischance befallen him? Perchance I shall light upon him on the road. I will now go to Bethany. But what will thy heart feel, most beloved Mother, when I shall relate all to thee! O Judas, what a fearful deed thou hast accomplished!

SCENE VIII.

CHRIST *in the midst of the* BAND OF MEN, *sitting upon a chair.*

Servants [one after another] — Is not this throne too mean for Thee, great King? — Hail to Thee, new-born ruler! But sit more firmly, else mightest Thou perchance fall down. [*He pushes JESUS down.*] Thou art verily also a Prophet. Then say, great Elias [*he strikes Him*], who is he that smote Thee? — Was it I? [*He also strikes Him.*] Hearest thou nothing? [*He shakes Him.*] Sleepest Thou? — He is deaf and dumb. A fine Prophet! [*He pushes Him down from the chair so that He falls at full length.*] Alas, alas, our King has tumbled from His throne! — What is to be done now? we have no King left! — Thou art really to be pitied, Thou great Miracle-worker! — Come, let us help Him up again upon His throne! [*They raise Him.*] Get up, mighty King! Receive anew our homage!

Messenger from Caiaphas [entering] — Now, how goes it with the new King?

Band of Men — He speaks and prophesies not; we can do nothing with Him.

Messenger — The High Priest and Pilate will soon make Him speak. Caiaphas sends me to bring Him before him.

Selpha — Up, comrades!

Servant [takes JESUS by the cords] — Get up; Thou hast been King long enough.

All — Away with Thee, Thy kingdom has come to an end!

ACT X.

The Despair of JUDAS.

PROLOGUE.

Wherefore wanders Judas thus mally abroad? Alas! he is tortured by the pain of an evil conscience. Blood-guiltiness lies upon his

soul, he roams about in fiery torment — the wages of sin. Weep, O Judas, for what thou hast committed! Oh, blot out thy guilt with tears of penitence! In lowly hope entreat for grace! Yet doth the door of salvation stand open to thee. Woe, alas! Bitterest remorse tortures him indeed, but through the darkness no ray of hope shines on him. "Too great! too great is my sin!" he exclaims with Cain, the fratricide. Like him, comfortless and unrepentant, wild despair and horror seize upon him. That is the last wages of sin. This fate doth it urge on.

Chorus —

"Woe to that man," so spake the Lord,
 "By whom I am betrayed.
 It had been better for that man
 If he had ne'er been born."

And now this woe, which Jesus spake,
 Follows on th' Iscariot's steps;
 'Twill be poured out in measure full.
 The blood he sold for vengeance cries

Aloud: — by gnawing conscience scourged,
 Whipt by each Fury's frantic rage,
 He now runs raving to and fro,
 And finds no rest for evermore.
 Till he, alas! torn by despair,
 Casts from him in bewildered haste
 The load intol'able of life.

Tableau: The Death of ABEL.

Thus Cain, too, flies. Whither, alas!
 Thou canst not from thyself escape.
 Thou bear'st within thee pains of hell;
 And hast'nest thou from place to place,
 Unceasingly the scourge is plied.

Where'er thou art, the scourge is there;
 Thou never canst outrun thy pain.
 This shall the sinners' mirror be;
 For if revenge come not to-day —
 Yet Heaven on credit still can go;
 So falls the double judgment sore
 Upon their heads the morrow morn.

SCENE I.

Judas [alone] — My fearful foreboding has then become a horrible certainty, Caiaphas has condemned the Master to death, and the Council has concurred in his judgment. It is over! no hope, no deliverance left. If the Master had willed to save Himself, He would have made them feel His might a second time in the garden. Now He will do it no more. And what can I do for Him, I, miserable I, who have delivered Him into their hands! They shall have the money again — the blood money: they must give me my Master back again! Yet — will He be saved thereby? O vain hope! They will scorn me, I know it! Accursed synagogue! thou hast seduced me through thy messengers, hast hidden thy bloody design from me until thou hadst Him in thy clutches. I will have no part in the blood of the Innocent! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The Sanhedrim.

Caiaphas — I thought, O fathers, that I could not wait till morning to send the Enemy of the synagogue to His death.

Annas — I also could get not a moment's rest, for eagerness to hear the judgment pronounced.

All — It is pronounced. He shall and must die!

Caiaphas — I will now have the Criminal brought in again in order that ye may all be convinced of His being guilty of death.

SCENE III.

JUDAS, hastening in.

Judas — Is it true? Have ye condemned my Master to death?

Rabbi — Why dost thou force thyself in here unsummoned? Be off! Thou wilt be called if thou art wanted.

Judas — I must know it. Have ye condemned Him?

All — He must die!

Judas — Woe, woe, I have sinned! I have betrayed the Righteous! O ye, ye bloodthirsty judges, ye condemn and murder the guiltless!

All — Peace, Judas, or —

Judas — No peace for me for evermore ! No peace for you !
The blood of the Innocent cries for vengeance !

Caiaphas — What makes thee crazy ? Speak, but speak
with reverence. Thou standest before the Sanhedrim.

Judas — Ye are resolved to give Him up to death who is
pure from all guilt. Ye dare not ! I protest against it ! Ye
have made me a traitor. Your accursed pieces of silver —

Annas — Thou didst thyself make the offer and conclude
the bargain —

Priest — Recollect thyself, Judas ! Thou hast received what
thou didst desire. And if thou behavest thyself quietly, then
mayest thou still —

Judas — I will have nothing more ! I tear your shameful
treaty in pieces ! Give up the Innocent One !

Rabbi — Be off, madman !

Judas — I demand the Innocent One back again ! My hand
shall be pure from the blood —

Rabbi — What, thou infamous traitor, thou wilt prescribe
laws to the Sanhedrim ! Know this ! Thy Master must die,
and thou hast delivered Him to death.

All — He must die !

Judas [*with staring eyes*] — Die ? I am a traitor ! [*Break-
ing out wildly.*] Then may ten thousand devils from hell
tear me in pieces ! May they grind me to powder ! Here, ye
bloodhounds, take your curse, your blood money !

[*He throws down the bag.*]

Caiaphas — Why didst thou let thyself be used for a trans-
action which thou hadst not weighed beforehand ?

All — See thou to it.

Judas — Then my soul shall be damned, my body burst
asunder, and ye —

All — Silence, and take thyself hence !

Judas — Ye shall be dragged with me into the abyss of
hell !

[*He rushes out.*]

SCENE IV.

Caiaphas [*after a pause*] — A fearful man !

Annas — I had some foreboding of it.

Priest — It is his own fault.

Caiaphas — He has betrayed his Friend, we prosecute our
Enemy. I stand fast in my resolve, and if there be one here
who is of another mind, let him stand up.

All — No! What is determined, let it be carried out!

Caiaphas — What shall we do with this money? As blood money it may not be put into the treasury of God.

Priest — A burying-place for strangers is wanted. With this money a field for it could be bought.

Caiaphas — Is there such a one on sale?

Priest — A potter in the city has offered a piece of ground for sale, for just this price.

Caiaphas — Go then and buy it. But now we will no longer delay to pronounce the last sentence upon the Prisoner.

Rabbi — I will have Him immediately brought in.

Annas — I shall see whether the scorn which He showed towards me has yet left Him. It will be a true satisfaction to me to have a voice in the sentence — Let Him die.

SCENE V.

CHRIST before the Sanhedrim.

Selpha [*bringing in JESUS*] — Reverence the Council better than before.

Caiaphas — Lead Him into the midst.

Balbus — Stand forth! [*He pushes the Prisoner forward.*]

Caiaphas — Jesus of Nazareth, dost Thou persist in the words which Thou this night hast spoken before Thy judges?

Annas — If Thou art the Christ, tell us.

Christ — If I tell you, ye will not believe: and if I also ask you, ye will not answer me, nor let me go. Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God.

All — Art Thou then the Son of God?

Christ — Ye say that I am.

Annas — It is enough. What need we any further witness?

Priests and Pharisees [*who were not present at the night Council*] — We have now heard of His own mouth.

Caiaphas — Fathers of the people of Israel! it behooves you now to determine the final sentence as to the guilt and the punishment of this man.

All — He is guilty of blasphemy! He hath deserved death!

Caiaphas — We will accordingly lead Him before the judgment-seat of Pilate.

All — Yea, away with Him! Let Him die!

Caiaphas — Pilate must, however, be first informed about the matter in order that he may publish the sentence before the

feast. [*He sends a RABBI and two other members of the Council to PILATE.*] This day will indeed save the religion of our fathers and exalt the honor of the synagogue, so that the echo of our renown may resound to our latest descendants. Lead Him away, we follow !

All — Death to the Galilæan !

SCENE VI.

The THREE MESSENGERS of the Sanhedrim before PILATE'S house.

Rabbi — At length we breathe more freely, we have been insulted long enough.

First Priest — It was full time, His following is already very large.

Rabbi — Now there is nothing more to fear from Him. The traders have to-day shown the most praiseworthy activity, in order to gain for us a crowd of determined folk. Ye will see : if it comes to anything, these will give the tone decidedly. The weak-minded will consent with them, and the followers of the Nazarene will find it well to be silent and to withdraw themselves.

First Priest — How shall we bring our request before Pilate? We must not enter the house of the heathen to-day, else we shall be unclean to eat the Passover.

Rabbi — We will have the petition delivered through his people. [*Knocks at the door. To PILATE'S Servant, who comes out.*] The High Priest sends us to petition the sublime representative of Cæsar that he would permit the Council to appear before him, and to bring a Criminal before him for ratification of His sentence.

Servant — I will at once give the message. [*Exit.*]

First Priest — It is sad that we must knock at a heathen's door in order to fulfill the claims of the holy law.

Rabbi — Courage ! When once our domestic Enemy is out of the way, who knows if we shall soon get rid of this stranger?

Second Priest — O that I could see the day which will bring freedom to the children of Israel !

Servant [returning] — The Governor greets you. You are to announce to the High Priest that Pilate is ready to receive the petition of the Sanhedrim.

Rabbi — Accept our thanks.

Second Priest [as they are going] — Pilate will surely assent to the demand of the Sanhedrim ?

Rabbi — He must ! How can he stand out when the Sanhedrim and the whole people require the death of this man ?

First Priest — What does the life of a Galilæan matter to the Governor ? Even to please the High Priest, which is worth much to him, he will not hesitate to allow the execution.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII.

The end of JUDAS. A woody scene.

Judas — Whither shall I go to hide my infamy ? No forest darkness is secret enough, no rocky cavern deep enough ! Swallow me up, O earth ! Alas, my Master, best of all men, have I sold — delivered Him up to ill treatment, to the most agonizing death ! How gracious was He even towards me ! How He comforted me when gloomy misery often oppressed my soul ! How lovingly did He remind me and warn me, even when already I brooded over my treachery ! Execrable covetousness, thou alone hast seduced me ! Alas, now no longer a disciple, never dare I again come into the presence of one of the brethren ! An outcast — everywhere hated and abhorred even by those who led me astray — I wander about alone with this glowing fire in my heart ! Alas, if I could only dare again to behold His countenance, I might cling to Him, the only Anchor of hope ! but He lies in prison, is perchance already put to death through the fury of His enemies — ah, no ! through my guilt ! Woe is me — me, the offscouring of mankind ! For me there is no hope, my crime can no longer be repaired by any penitence ! He is dead, and I am His murderer ! Unhappy hour, when my mother bore me ! Shall I any longer bear these tortures ? No, I will not go a step further ! Here will I breathe thee out, accursed life ! Let the most miserable of all fruit hang on this tree ! [*He tears off his girdle.*] Ha ! come, thou serpent, twist round me ! strangle the traitor ! [*He prepares for suicide. The curtain falls.*]

ACT XI.

CHRIST before PILATE.

PROLOGUE.

Hardly were the words heard, "Death to Him, the Enemy of Moses !"
than they are taken up by many voices. Thirsting with tiger-thirst

for the Gentile sentence, ye gather tumultuously together, take counsel unwearingly, bring accusation upon accusation, impatiently expecting the sentence of condemnation. So once against Daniel the thousand-voiced cry arose: "He has destroyed Baal! Away with him to the lions' den! He shall be their prey!" Alas! when deceiving misconceptions have found entrance into the human heart, man is no longer himself. Injustice becomes to him virtue, whilst he hates and fights against virtue.

Chorus —

"He hath blasphemed God!
We need no witness more.
Condemned to death
By law is He;" —
So rages the Sanhedrim.
"Up! we will hence to Pilate,
Bring our complaints before him,
Sentence of death force from him."

Tableau: DANIEL accused before DARIUS.

Look well on this dumb picture: —
As Daniel erst at Babylon,
God's Son they falsely now accuse.

"Foe of the gods is Daniel!
O King, hear thou thy people's plaint:
Great Bel hath he destroyed —
The priests and dragon hath he slain.
Furious before thy throne
Appears all Babylon.

The people's wrath wilt thou escape?
Then give to death the gods' great foe.
Death to him! Death alone, O King,
Will reconcile our gods to us."

So hastes the wicked Sanhedrim
In furious rage to Pilate,
E'en as those wretches once had done;
And with wild tumult they make suit,
With tiger's rage and lion's wrath,
That Innocence to death be brought.

O Envy! Satan's offspring vile,
What wilt thou not begin — or dare,
To satisfy thy rancorous spite?

To thee naught holy is, or good ;
 All thou dost sacrifice to rage,
 And to thy wicked will.

Woe to him whom this passion fierce
 Draws to itself with serpent-chains !
 'Gainst envious desires,
 O brothers, be upon your guard !
 Nor ever let this viper-brood
 Nestle within your hearts.

SCENE I.

Before PILATE'S House. On the left the Sanhedrim, the TRADERS and WITNESSES ; on the right the BAND OF MEN with JESUS.

Band of Men [bringing JESUS forward] — Away with Thee to death, false Prophet ! — Ha ! Doth it terrify Thee, that Thou wilt not come forward ?

Selpha — Drive Him on !

Band of Men — Must we carry Thee in our arms ? Get on ! Thy journey will not last much longer ! Only out to Calvary ! There, on the Cross, canst thou comfortably rest !

Caiaphas — Be quiet ! We wish to have ourselves announced. [*They are quiet.*] Ye members of the Sanhedrim ! If the holy teaching inherited by us, if our honor, if the peace of the whole land be still dear to you, then consider well this moment ! It decides between us and that Deceiver ! If ye be men in whose veins still flows the blood of your fathers, then hear us ! An imperishable monument will ye set up for yourselves. Be firm in your resolve !

The Sanhedrim — Long live our fathers ! Death to the Enemy of our nation !

Caiaphas — Do not rest till He be blotted out of the number of the living !

All — We will not rest !

Band of Men — Hearest Thou, O King, O Prophet ?

SCENE II.

PILATE appears with ATTENDANTS upon his balcony.

Caiaphas [bowing] — Viceroy of the great Emperor of Rome !

All — Health and blessings attend thee !

Caiaphas — We have brought a man, by name Jesus, here before thy judgment-seat, that thou mayest have executed the sentence of death pronounced upon Him by the Sanhedrim.

Pilate — Bring Him forth. What accusations bring ye against this man?

Caiaphas — If He were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered Him up unto thee, but would have punished Him ourselves according to the order of our law.

Pilate — Now — what evil deeds hath He committed?

Caiaphas — He hath in manifold ways gravely offended against the holy law of Israel.

Pilate — Then take ye Him and judge Him according to your law.

Annas — He hath already been judged by the Sanhedrim and declared guilty of death.

All the Priests — For according to our law He hath deserved death.

Caiaphas — But it is not lawful for us to put any man to death. Therefore bring we the demand for the fulfillment of the sentence before the Viceroy of the Emperor.

Pilate — How can I deliver a man to death without I know his crime, and before I have convinced myself that the crime is worthy of death? What hath He done?

Rabbi — The judgment of the Council against this man was given with one voice, and grounded upon an exact examination of His crime. Therefore it does not seem necessary that the noble Governor should give himself the trouble of a second inquiry.

Pilate — What? Ye dare to suggest to me, who stand in the Emperor's place, that I should be a blind tool for the execution of your resolve? That be far from me! I must know what law He hath transgressed, and in what manner.

Caiaphas — We have a law, and by our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God.

Annas — Therefore must we insist that He suffer the lawful punishment of death.

Pilate — On account of such a speech, which at worst is only the dream of a fanciful imagination, a Roman can find no one guilty of death. Who knows, too, if this Man be not the Son of some god? If you have no other crime to lay to His charge, do not expect that I shall fulfill your desire.

Caiaphas — Not merely against our holy law, but also against

the Emperor himself has this man been guilty of grave crimes. We have found Him an insurgent and a deceiver of the people.

All — He stirreth up the people ; He is a rebel !

Pilate — I have indeed heard of One Jesus, who goeth about the land and teacheth and doeth marvelous works ; but never have I heard of any insurrection stirred up by Him. If anything of the sort had happened, I should have known it before you, since I am placed in this country for the administration of peace, and am perfectly informed concerning the doings and practices of the Jews. But say : when and where did He stir up an insurrection ?

Nathanael — He brings troops of people in thousands around Him, and just a short time ago, surrounded by such a crowd, He made a solemn entry into Jerusalem itself.

Pilate — I know it, but nothing seditious was caused by it.

Caiaphas — Is it not sedition when He forbids the people to give tribute to Cæsar ?

Pilate — Where is your proof ?

Caiaphas — Proof sufficient, since He gives Himself out for the Messiah, the King of Israel ! Is not that a challenge for the downfall of the Emperor ?

Pilate — I marvel at your suddenly aroused zeal for the authority of Cæsar. [*To CHRIST.*] Hearest Thou what heavy complaints these bring against Thee ? What answerest Thou ? [*CHRIST is silent.*]

Caiaphas — See ! He cannot deny it.

Priest — His silence is a confession of His crime.

All [*making a tumult*] — Sentence Him, then !

Pilate — Patience ! there is time enough for that. I will take Him apart for a private hearing. [*To his ATTENDANTS.*] Perchance, when He is no longer affrighted by the crowd and the fury of His accusers, He will speak and answer me. Let Him be brought into the porch. [*To the SERVANT.*] Go ; my soldiers will take charge of Him. [*To the MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.*] And ye — consider once again the ground, or want of ground, for your complaints, and examine well whether they do not perchance spring from an impure source. Let me then know your sentiments. [*Turns away from them.*]

Rabbi [*going away*] — This is a troublesome delay.

Caiaphas — Do not lose courage. Victory belongs to the steadfast !

SCENE III.

CHRIST *is brought forth upon the balcony.*

Pilate [to CHRIST] — Thou hast heard the accusation of the Council against Thee. Give me an answer thereto! Thou hast, they say, called Thyself the Son of God. Whence art Thou? [CHRIST *is silent.*] Speakest Thou not unto me? Knowest Thou not that I have power to crucify Thee, and have power to release Thee?

Christ — Thou couldst have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above. Therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

Pilate [*aside*] — Frankly spoken! [To CHRIST.] Art Thou the King of the Jews?

Christ — Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?

Pilate — Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief Priests have delivered Thee unto me. They accuse Thee, that Thou hast desired to be the King of Israel. What hast Thou done?

Christ — My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence.

Pilate — Art Thou a King, then?

Christ — Thou sayest it. I am a King. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

Pilate — What is truth?

SCENE IV.

Enter SERVANT.

Servant — My lord, thy consort greeteth thee, and earnestly prays thee for the sake of thine own and her welfare that thou wouldst have nothing to do with that just man, who has been accused at thy judgment-seat. She has suffered anguish and terror this night in a fearful dream because of Him.

Pilate — Go hence and tell her that she may be without

anxiety. I will take no part in the attempts of the Jews, but rather do everything to save Him.

SCENE V.

Pilate — [to his ATTENDANTS] — I would that I knew nothing of this matter. What think ye, my friends, of the complaints of the Jewish priests?

First Courtier — They are only impelled by envy and jealousy. The most passionate hatred expresses itself in their words and their mien.

Second Courtier — The hypocrites pose as though they had the authority of the Emperor much at heart, while there is no question except of their own authority, which they believe endangered through this famous Teacher of the people.

Pilate — I think as you do. I cannot believe that this man hath any criminal plans in His mind. There is something so noble in His features and His demeanor, — His words also exhibit such noble frankness and high endowments, that He appears to me to be far more a very wise man, perchance too wise, for these gloomy men to bear the light of His wisdom. And the sorrowful dream of my consort concerning Him? If perchance He were truly of a high origin? No! I will by no means permit myself to meet the wishes of the priesthood. [To the SERVANT] — Let the High Priest again appear here, — and let the Accused be again led from the judgment-hall.

[*Exit the SERVANT.*]

SCENE VI.

The SANHEDRIM under the balcony.

Pilate — Here ye have your Prisoner again. He is without fault.

Annas — We have the Emperor's word that our law shall be uprightly maintained. How can He be found without guilt who trod under foot this same law?

All — He is guilty of death!

Caiaphas — Is He not also punishable by the Emperor when He has maliciously injured that which the Emperor's will has secured to us?

Pilate — I have told you already: if He hath committed anything against your law, then punish Him according to your

law, so far as ye are authorized thereto. I cannot pronounce the sentence of death upon Him because I find nothing in Him which, after the law by which I have to judge Him, deserveth death.

Caiaphas — If any one giveth himself out as a king, is he not a rebel? Doth he not deserve the punishment of high treason — the punishment of death?

Pilate — If this man hath called Himself a king, this ambiguous word merely doth not justify me in condemning Him. With us it is openly taught that every wise man is a king. But ye have brought forward no facts as to His usurping kingly power.

Nathanael — Is it not fact enough when He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee, where He first gathered followers together, to this place.

Pilate — Hath He come out of Galilee?

All — Yea, He is a Galilean.

Rabbi — His home is Nazareth, in King Herod's jurisdiction.

Pilate — If that be so, I am spared the office of judge. Herod, the King of Galilee, has come hither to the Feast; he may now judge his subject. Take Him away, and bring Him to His King. He shall be conducted by my body-guard.

[*Exit with his ATTENDANTS.*]

Caiaphas — Away, then, to Herod! With him who professes himself of the faith of our fathers shall we find better protection for our holy law.

All [to CHRIST] — An hour sooner or later! But Thou must come to it. To-day also! [*Exeunt omnes.*]

ACT XII.

CHRIST before HEROD.

PROLOGUE.

He, the most loving, meets with fresh outrages before Herod, because He does not flatteringly exercise the gifts of a seer before that vain prince, or work miracles. Therefore is Wisdom itself by fools despised as a fool, and arrayed in a white garment set forth as a spectacle for a short time to the mocking servants of the king. Samson, the dread hero-youth, now bereft of eyesight and fettered, is laughed at and despised for his weakness by the Philistines. Yet, He who now seems weak will show forth strength. He who seems

*cast down will shine forth in greatness. Above worthless scorn
Virtue reigns sublime.*

Chorus —

In vain within the judgment-hall shoots forth
Wild hate, the glowing flames of calumny.
To meet them comes the judge unwavering ;
The foe's wrath breaks upon his steadfastness.
Yet rest they not ! — Sadly we must follow Jesus to Herod.
There, ah, with mournful hearts we see
Fresh shame prepared for Him.

Tableau : SAMSON making Sport for the PHILISTINES.

Chorus —

See Samson : See how the strong hand
The chains of slavery must bear !
The hero, who a thousand slew,
Slave's garb of scorn he now must wear.

So dreadful once to enemies,
He serves as aim for all their scorn ;
Philistines use him for their sport,
Rejoice themselves in his decay.

Thus also Jesu, God's Son, stands,
The gazing-stock of haughty fools,
Reviled, derided, in white robes,
And overwhelmed with spite and scorn.

SCENE I.

A hall : HEROD and his Court.

Herod — So they have the renowned magician Jesus of Nazareth as Prisoner with them. Of a long season have I been desirous to see Him of whose works so much is spoken. I will prove His miraculous power.

Courtier — He will surely be willingly ready, O King, to show forth His works to thee in order to gain thy favor against His accusers.

Herod — They may bring their accusations before Pilate, I have nothing to examine here, and nothing to pronounce.

Courtier. — Perchance the Governor has sent them away, and now they seek to attain their end in another way.

Herod — I will not meddle with their pious squabbles, I will only see Him and prove His miraculous powers.

SCENE II.

CHRIST enters, led by SOLDIERS.

Caiaphas — Most mighty king!

All the Priests — Hail and blessing!

Caiaphas — The Sanhedrim has seized a Seducer and brings Him before the king for confirmation of the lawful punishment.

Herod — How can I give judgment in a foreign territory? [*To CHRIST.*] Give us a proof of Thy learning: we will then, together with the people, honor Thee and believe on Thee.

Priests — O King, let not thyself be led astray! He is in covenant with Beelzebub.

Herod — It is the same to me. Tell me, what did I dream last night? [*CHRIST is silent.*] Perchance Thou canst interpret to me my dream. [*He relates it. CHRIST answers not.*] Thou art not well skilled in this line of business? Then cause that this hall may suddenly become dark, change that roll there, which contains Thy sentence, into a serpent! [*To his COURTIERs.*] He knows nothing and can do nothing. He is a fool, whom the applause of the people has made crazy. [*To the PRIESTs.*] Let Him go!

Caiaphas — O King, trust Him not! He only pretends to be a fool in order to get a mild sentence from thee by artifice.

Annas — Even the person of the King is in danger, for He has given Himself out as a king.

Herod — He! As a king? As a king of fools! As such He deserves homage, therefore will I give Him a king's robe and formally install Him as king of fools. [*He makes a sign to a Servant.*]

Priests — Not so, He hath deserved death!

Caiaphas — O King, think upon thy duty to punish the transgressor of the law!

Herod — What have ye exactly against Him?

Rabbi — He hath profaned the Sabbath!

Nathanael — He hath blasphemed God!

Priest — He hath declared that He will destroy the Temple, and in three days will build it up.

Herod — Well, He hath rightly proved Himself a king of fools.

Priest — He hath so far presumed, O King, as to call thee a fox.

Herod — Then has he laid to my door a quality which entirely suits Himself. [*A Servant comes with a robe.*] Array Him! Thus shall He play His part amongst the people.

Priests — He shall die!

Herod — No, I will not shed the blood of so exalted a king. Bring Him before the people, that they may marvel at Him to their heart's desire.

[*The SOLDIERS lead JESUS away amidst mocking words.*]

SCENE III.

Caiaphas — Thou seest now, O King, that His mighty works are nothing but lies and deceit, by which He hath seduced the people; give then thy sentence.

Herod — My sentence is: He is a simple fellow, and not capable of the crime of which ye accuse Him.

Caiaphas — O King, give heed that thou deceive not thyself.

Herod — One must deal with fools as fools. My court of justice is over.

Rabbi — So this has come to pass concerning the law, Moses, and the prophets!

Herod — I hold by my sentence. I am weary, and will no longer meddle with the story. Pilate may decide according to the duty of his office. Offer him greeting and friendly salutation from King Herod. [*Ereunt the PRIESTS.*]

SCENE IV.

Herod — I was mistaken. Instead of a worker of miracles, I found a quite ordinary man.

Courtier — How doth lying report know how to embellish things!

Herod — Friend, that is no John. John spake with a wisdom and power which one was forced to esteem, but this Man is as dumb as a fish.

Courtier — I am only surprised at the bitter hatred of the Priests against Him.

Herod — If Pilate had found Him a state criminal, he would not have sent Him to me; but enough of this wearisome matter: we will make amends for lost time by better entertainment.

ACT XIII.

The Scourging and Crown of Thorns.

PROLOGUE.

Alas! what a sight here presents itself to our eyes, ever to be contemplated by the disciples of Christ! The body of the Lord wounded all over with innumerable blows of scourge, His head crowned with a sharp, thorny wreath! His countenance scarcely recognizable, running down with blood! who would not here shed a tear of inmost pity? When our father Jacob beheld the bloody coat of his beloved, how did he tremble and weep, full of sorrow, giving way to heartrending cries of grief! Let us also weep when we see the Divine Friend of our soul endure such things, for ah! on account of our sins is He wounded and torn.

Chorus —

Not yet have they from raging ceased —
 Their thirst for vengeance is not stilled;
 Only on thoughts of murder broods
 The band, with Satan's hatred filled.
 Can naught e'er soften then these hearts?

Not e'en a body, torn by scourge-strokes,
 Covered with wounds innum'able?
 Can sympathy by naught be waked?

First Tableau: JOSEPH'S BRETHREN bringing his Bloody Coat to JACOB.

Chorus —

Oh, what a scene of horrid dire!
 The coat of Joseph stained with blood,
 And Jacob's aged cheeks are wet
 With bitter tears of deepest grief.

"Where is my Joseph? Where my joy,
 In whose sweet eyes mine eyes find rest?
 The blood is dripping from this coat,
 "The blood of Joseph — of my son.

"A wild beast must have mangled him,
 Torn him, my darling. Ah, alas!
 Thee, Joseph, will I follow soon;
 My pain no comfort can assuage."

Thus mourns he — thus doth he lament
 For Joseph — that he is no more.
 Thus Jesu's body will be torn
 With wildest rage,
 His Precious Blood
 In streams from every wound will flow.

Second Tableau: The Sacrifice of ISAAC.

"Abraham! Abraham! slay him not
 Thy faith hath" — thus saith
 Jehovah — "giv'n up thine only son:
 Thine now again — for nations' weal shall live."

Within the thicket Abr'am saw
 A ram caught in the thorny shoots,
 He took and quickly offered it,
 Jehovah's chosen sacrifice.

This type shows a great mystery
 Still veiled in holy twilight gloom.
 As once Moriah's sacrifice,
 With thorns crowned Christ will soon appear.

The Thorn-crowned will for us His life
 An off'ring give — the Father's Will.
 Where can we ever find a love
 Which to this Love can equal be?

SCENE I.

CAIAPHAS, ANNAS, *the COUNCIL, the TRADERS, and the WITNESSES appear again, with CHRIST led by SOLDIERS, before PILATE'S house.*

Caiaphas — Now must we the more importunately challenge Pilate, and if he does not judge after our will, then shall the authority of the Emperor force the sentence from him.

Annas — Shall I now in my old age see the synagogue destroyed? But no! with stammering tongue will I call for blood and death upon this Criminal, and then descend to my father's sepulchre if I can see this Malefactor die upon the cross.

Rabbi — We will sooner allow ourselves to be buried beneath the ruins of the Temple than go back from our resolve.

Pharisees — We must not give it up until He be given up to death.

Caiaphas — He who does not stand by this resolution, let him be put out of the synagogue.

Annas — Let the curse of our fathers light upon him!

Caiaphas — Time presses, the day wears on, now must all means be employed that even to-day before the feast our will be accomplished.

SCENE II.

PILATE appears with attendants upon the balcony.

Caiaphas — We bring the Prisoner once more before thy judgment-seat, and earnestly require His death.

Priests and Pharisees — We insist upon it! He must die!

Pilate — Ye have brought this man unto me as one that perverteth the people! and behold, I, having examined Him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse Him.

Caiaphas — We stand by our accusation. He is a Criminal worthy of death!

Priests — A Criminal against our law and against the Emperor.

Pilate — Because He is a Galilean, I have sent Him to Herod. Have ye then brought forward your accusations?

Caiaphas — Yea, Herod would decide nothing, because here thou art in authority.

Pilate — He also found nothing worthy of death in Him, therefore, in order to meet your demands, I will cause this man to be chastised with scourging; but then release Him.

Annas — That sufficeth not!

Caiaphas — The law doth not award to such a Criminal the punishment of scourging, but that of death.

Priests — To death with Him!

Pilate — Is your hatred against this man so deep and bitter that it cannot be satisfied by blood from His wounds? Ye force me to say openly to you that which I think. Moved by ignoble passion, ye persecute Him, because the people are better inclined to Him than to you. I have long enough heard your hateful accusations, I will now hear the voice of the people. A countless multitude will soon assemble here, in order, after ancient custom, to request the release of a prisoner

at the feast of the Passover. Then will it be shown whether your accusations are the expression of the people's mind or only of your personal hatred.

Caiaphas [*bowing*]—It will be shown, O Governor, that thou unjustly thinkest evil of us.

Priest—Truly, not hatred but holy zeal for the law of God is it which moves us to desire His death.

Pilate—Ye know of the murderer Barabbas, who lies in fetters, and of his evil deeds. I will give the people the choice between him and Jesus of Nazareth. Him whom they desire, him will I release.

All—Release Barabbas unto us and crucify Jesus.

Pilate—Ye are not the people, the people will speak for themselves, meanwhile I will chastise Him. [*To a Servant.*] Let the soldiers lead Him away and scourge Him after the Roman law. [*To those around him.*] Whatsoever He hath done amiss will thereby be sufficiently expiated, and perchance the sight of the Scourged One may mitigate the wrath of His enemies. [*Exit with attendants.*]

SCENE III.

The PRIESTS, etc., beneath the empty balcony.

Caiaphas—Pilate appeals to the voice of the people. Good, we will appeal to the same. [*To the TRADERS and WITNESSES.*] Now, gallant Israelites, your time has come, Go hence into the streets of Jerusalem and summon your friends to come hither. Bring them together in a close band! Inflame them with the most fiery hatred against the Enemy of Moses. Seek to win the weak-minded by the power of your words, and by promises. Terrify the followers of the Galilean by a united outcry against them, by insult and storm, and, if it must be, through ill-treatment, so that none of them may dare to let themselves be seen here, much less to open their mouths.

Traders and Witnesses—We will hasten hence and quickly return, each one at the head of an inflamed troop.

Caiaphas—We will all assemble in the street of the Sanhedrim. [*Exeunt the TRADERS. The PRIESTS call after them: Hail! true disciples of Moses!*]

Caiaphas—Let us not now delay a moment! Let us go to

meet the different bands to encourage them, and to inflame them!

Annas — From all the streets of Jerusalem we will then bring the assembled people before the judgment-hall.

Rabbi — Since Pilate wishes to hear the voice of the people, let him hear it!

Caiaphas — Let him hear the cry of the nation with one voice. Release unto us Barabbas, and crucify the Galilæan!

All — Release unto us Barabbas, and crucify the Galilæan!
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

CHRIST stripped of His garments, and His hands bound to a low pillar; around Him the SOLDIERS.

Soldiers [one after another] — Now hath He enough, He is all running down with blood! — Thou poor King of the Jews! — But what a King is that? He bears no scepter in His hand, no crown upon His head? — That can be mended. I will at once fetch the ensigns of the Jewish kingdom. [*He brings a purple robe, the crown of thorns, and the reed.*] Here! that is truly a most fair adornment for the King of the Jews! Thou didst not expect such honor, didst Thou? — Come, let the purple robe fall around Thee; but sit down, a King must not stand. And here is a fine pointed crown! [*They put it on Him.*] Show Thyself! [*Laughter.*] In order, however, that it fall not from His head, it must be firmly set on. Here, brothers, help me! [*Four soldiers take hold of the ends of two staves and press down the crown. CHRIST shrinks in pain.*] Here is the scepter! — Now nothing more is wanting to thee. — What a King! [*They kneel before Him.*] Hail, mighty King of the Jews!

Servant of Pilate [coming in] — The Prisoner must immediately be brought to the judgment-hall.

Soldiers — Thou comest at a wrong time, thou hast disturbed us in the midst of our marks of reverence. Get up! They want to carry Thee about for a show. There will be rejoicing amongst the people of the Jews when their King appears before them in fullest pomp.

[*Exeunt with JESUS.*]

ACT XIV.

JESUS condemned to Death.

PROLOGUE.

The Redeemer stands forth an image of sorrow. Himself moved with compassion, Pilate brings Him forth. Hast thou then no pity, O befooled, deceived people? No! Seized with madness, they cry, Crucify Him! They demand torture and death for the Holiest and pardon for the murderer Barabbas. O how differently did Joseph once stand before the people of Egypt! Songs of gladness and jubilation sounded in his ears; he was solemnly installed as the saviour of Egypt. But around Him, the Saviour of the world, rages a deceived people, who rest not and cease not until the judge unwillingly pronounces: Take ye Him and crucify Him.

Chorus —

O see the King! See Him in scorn
 As monarch — crowned — with what a crown!
 And with what scepter in His hand!
 See Him in purple robe arrayed,
 Yea, and with crimson rays bedecked.
 Is that the festal garb of kings?
 Where is in Him the Godhead's mark?
 Behold the man!
 A worm — the scorn of hangman now.

First Tableau: JOSEPH made Governor over Egypt.

Behold the man!
 Joseph is called to dignity —
 Behold the man!
 Jesu brought forth for sympathy.
 Loud shall it ring through Egypt's coasts:
 "Live Joseph long! both high and great!"
 A thousand times shall it resound:
 "Father of Egypt! — friend to all!"
 And all unite, both great and small,
 In our triumphant jubilee.

Of Egypt thou the stay and joy,
 And blessing, such as ne'er has been.
 Joseph, to-day doth Egypt bring
 Her homage full of joy to thee.

Loud shall it ring through Egypt's coasts, etc.

The country's second father, he
 Now reigns within our realm and hearts!
 E'en the perverse with blessing pays —
 Hail to him! Egypt's pride and joy!
 Loud shall it ring through Egypt's coasts, etc.

Second Tableau: The Goat sacrificed as a Sin-offering.

Chorus —

The ancient cov'nant's off'ring this,
 As God ordained it should be brought,
 Two goats before His altar placed,
 And then on one the lot doth fall —
 The one by God chos'n for Himself.
 Jehovah! through blood-offering
 Again be to Thy people good!

The blood of goats the Lord doth will
 No more in the new covenant;
 New sacrifice He doth require.
 A Lamb from every blemish pure
 Must of this cov'nant off'ring be.
 His only Son the Lord demands;
 He cometh quickly — falls — and bleeds.

A double CHORUS now begins; the SCHUTZGEISTER singing alternately with the PEOPLE in the streets of Jerusalem, behind the scenes.

Chorus —

A murderous cry e'en now I hear!

People —

Barabbas be
 From fetters free!

Chorus —

No! Jesus be
 From fetters free!
 Wild rings, alas! the murderer's cry.

People —

To the Cross with Him!
 To the Cross with Him!

Chorus —

Behold Him! ah! behold ye Him!
 What evil ever hath He done?

People —

If thou release this wretched One,
 Then art thou not great Cæsar's friend.

Chorus —

Jerusalem ! Jerusalem !

The blood of His Son will the Lord yet avenge on you !

People —

His blood be on us, and on our children !

Chorus —

Be it then upon you, and on your children !

SCENE I.

Three bands of the people, each headed by PRIESTS and PHARISEES, enter from the three streets of Jerusalem. TRADERS and WITNESSES in each band. The band advancing from the right is led by the priest NATHANAEL, that on the left, entering by PILATE'S house, is led by EZEKIEL. The middle band is preceded by CAIAPHAS and ANNAS. Each of the four leaders excites and inflames his band ; even from afar their cry is heard. The four bands advance to the foreground, and unite in one mass, which acts, rages, and cries out as one man. For convenience the four bands of people are denoted by numbers.

Nathanael — Moses, your prophet, calls upon you ! His holy law calls you to vengeance !

First Band — We belong to Moses ! We are and will remain followers of Moses and of his teaching.

Third Band — We hold fast by our priests and scribes. Away with Him who rises up against them !

Fourth Band — Ye are our fathers. We will answer for your honor.

Annas — Come, children, cast yourselves into the arms of the holy Sanhedrim ; it will save you.

Ezekiel — Shake it off, shake it off, the yoke of the Deceiver !

Second Band — We will not know Him any longer, we follow you !

Third Band — The whole people applaud you !

Fourth Band — We will be free from the false Teacher, the Nazarene !

Four Leaders — Your fathers' God will again receive you, ye are once more a holy people unto Him !

The Whole Multitude — Ye are our true friends. Long live the great Sanhedrim ! Long live our teachers and priests !

Annas — And death to the Galilæan !

Caiaphas — Up ! let us hasten hence to Pilate ! The Nazarene shall die !

The Leaders — He hath falsified the law ! He hath despised Moses and the prophets !

The Whole Multitude — Death to the false Prophet !

Second Band — Crucify Him !

Second and Third Bands — Pilate must have Him crucified !

The Leaders — On the cross shall He expiate His crime !

Third and Fourth Bands — We will not rest till the sentence be pronounced. [*The whole crowd of people is now in the foreground.*]

Caiaphas [*dominating the people with glance and gesture*] — Hail, children of Israel ! Yea, ye are still worthy descendants of your father Abraham ! O rejoice that ye have escaped the unspeakable perdition which this Deceiver was fain to bring upon you and your children !

Annas [*CAIAPHAS at his side*] — Only the untiring efforts of your fathers have preserved the nation from the abyss !

The Whole Multitude — Long live the Council ! Death to the Nazarene !

Priests and Pharisees — Cursed be he who doth not cry out for His death !

The People — We require His death !

Caiaphas — Let Him be cast out of the heritage of our fathers !

The People — Let Him be cast out !

Caiaphas — The Governor will give you the choice between this Blasphemer of God and Barabbas. Let us insist upon the release of Barabbas !

The People — Let Barabbas go free and the Nazarene perish !

Annas — We thank you, O fathers, ye have listened to our desire !

All — Pilate must consent, the whole nation demands it from him !

Caiaphas — Fairest day to the children of Israel ! Children, be steadfast !

Priests and Pharisees — This day restores honor to the synagogue and peace to the people.

Caiaphas [*approaching PILATE'S house*] — Demand the sentence with tumult. Threaten a universal insurrection !

All [*tumultuously*] — We require the blood of our Enemy !

A Servant of Pilate [rushing out of the house] — Uproar !
Insurrection !

People — The Nazarene must die !

Caiaphas — Show courage ! Stand out unterrified ; the righteous cause defends us.

All — Pilate, pronounce the sentence of death !

Servant [from the balcony] — Quiet ! Peace !

All — No, we will not rest till Pilate consent !

Servant — Pilate will immediately appear. *[Exit.]*

All — We demand the death of the Nazarene !

Caiaphas [to the PRIESTS] — Now may Pilate, as he desired, be able to learn the mind of the people.

SCENE II.

PILATE *with ATTENDANTS and with the thorn-crowned CHRIST, led by two SOLDIERS, upon the balcony.*

All — Give judgment ! Sentence Him !

Pilate [pointing to JESUS] — Behold the man !

Priests and Pharisees — Crucify Him !

Pilate — Cannot even this pitiable sight win compassion from your hearts ?

All — Let Him die ! Crucify Him !

Caiaphas — Hear, O Governor, the voice of the people ! it consents to our accusation, and demands His death.

People — Yea, we desire His death !

Pilate [to the SOLDIERS] — Lead Him below, and let Barabbas be brought hither from the prison ! Let the jailer deliver him up immediately to the chief licitor.

Annas — Let Barabbas live ! Pronounce the sentence of death on the Nazarene !

People — Death to the Nazarene !

Pilate — I cannot comprehend this people. But a few days ago ye followed this man rejoicing and answering one another with shouts of triumph, through the streets of Jerusalem. Is it possible that to-day the same people should call out for His death and destruction ? That is despicable fickleness.

Caiaphas — The good people have at last learnt to see that they were deceived by an Adventurer who pretended to call Himself the Messiah, the King of Israel.

Nathanael — Now the eyes of this people are fully opened,

so that they see how that He cannot help Himself, — He, who promised to bring freedom and prosperity to the nation.

Ezekiel — Israel will have no Messiah who lets Himself be taken and bound and treated with every kind of scorn !

The People — Let Him die, the false Messiah, the Deceiver !

Pilate — Men of the Jewish people ! Ye have a custom that I should release a prisoner unto you at the feast. Look now upon these two ! The One — of gentle countenance, of noble demeanor, the image of a wise Teacher, whom ye have long honored as such, convicted of no one evil deed, and already humiliated by the most severe chastisement ! the other a vicious, savage man, a convicted robber and murderer, the horrible image of a finished scoundrel ! I appeal to your reason, to your human feeling ! Choose ! Whom will ye that I release unto you, Barabbas, or Jesus, whom ye call Christ ?

Priests and People — Let Barabbas go free !

Pilate — Will ye not that I release unto you the King of the Jews ?

Priests and People — Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas !

Caiaphas — Thou hast promised to release him whom the people should require.

Pilate [to CAIAPHAS] — I am accustomed to keep my promise without needing a reminder. [To the PEOPLE.] What shall I do, then, with the King of the Jews ?

Priests and People — Crucify Him !

Pilate — What, shall I crucify your King ?

The People — We have no king but Cæsar.

Pilate — I cannot condemn this man, for I find no fault in Him. He is sufficiently chastised. I will release Him.

Priest — If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend.

Caiaphas — He hath given Himself out as a king.

Priest — And he who pretends to be a king is a rebel against Cæsar.

Nathanael — And this Rebel is to remain unpunished and to scatter abroad still further the seeds of insurrection ?

People — It is the duty of the Governor to put Him out of the way.

Caiaphas — We have done our duty as subjects of Cæsar, and deliver this Insurgent to thee. If thou dost not attend to our accusation and the demand of the people, then are we free

from guilt. Thou alone, O Governor, art responsible to Cæsar for the consequences!

Annas — If on this man's account universal tumult and rebellion arise, we shall know who must bear the blame of it, and Cæsar also will know.

People — The matter must be brought before Cæsar.

Ezekiel — With astonishment will it be heard in Rome that Cæsar's Governor protected one guilty of high treason, whose death the entire people demanded.

The People — Thou must cause Him to be condemned, else will there be no peace in the land.

Pilate — What evil hath He done? I cannot and dare not condemn the innocent to death!

Caiaphas — Permit me to ask a question. Wherefore judgest thou this man so anxiously, when lately thou didst through thy soldiers cause a hundred to be slaughtered without judgment or sentence on account of a rebellious outcry?

[*PILATE starts.*

The People — Thou canst not then show favor to this man if thou wilt be a true servant of Cæsar.

Pilate — Let water be brought!

Caiaphas — The people will not leave this place until the sentence of death be pronounced upon the Enemy of Cæsar.

The People — Yea, we will not again leave this spot until the sentence is pronounced.

Pilate — Then your violence forces me to comply with your desire. Take Him hence and crucify Him! Yet behold! [*He washes his hands.*] I wash my hands; I am innocent of the blood of the Righteous. Ye may answer for it!

Priests and People — We take it upon ourselves. His blood be upon us and upon our children!

Pilate — Let Barabbas, at the demand of the people, be released. Take him away — outside the city gate, so that he never again tread these streets.

[*The SOLDIERS lead away BARABBAS.*

Priests and People — Now hast thou justly judged!

Pilate — I have yielded to your violent pressure in order to keep off greater evil, but in this blood-guiltiness will I have no part. Let it happen as ye, with tumultuous voices, have called out; let it be upon you and upon your children!

Priests and People — It is good; let it be upon us and upon our children!

Annas — We and our children will bless this day, and with thankful joy pronounce the name of Pontius Pilate!

The People — Long live our Governor! Long live Pontius Pilate!

Pilate — Let the two murderers who are kept in prison be brought here. Let the chief lictor give them over without delay to the soldiers! They have deserved death—much more than the accused.

Priests and People — He hath deserved death more than any.

Pilate — The sentence of death must be committed to writing and openly announced before all the people.

[*The SCRIBE begins to write. In the street behind the scenes the SOLDIERS who are bringing in the thieves are heard driving them on: "Will ye get on, ye perverse ones! Have ye not long ago deserved it? Thrust them on, the offscouring of mankind!"*]

Rabbi [pointing to the thieves] — There is a worthy companionship for the false Messiah upon His last journey!

Pilate [to the thieves] — Of you and of your evil deeds shall the earth this day be quit. Ye shall be crucified. — Let the sentence of death be now read.

Scribe [rises and reads] — I, Pontius Pilate, Governor in Judæa of the mighty Emperor Claudius Tiberius, pronounce, at the importunate desire of the High Priests of the Sanhedrim, and of the assembled people of the Jews, the sentence of death upon a certain Jesus of Nazareth, who is accused of having stirred up the people to rebellion, of having forbidden to give tribute to Cæsar, and of having given Himself out as King of the Jews. The same shall outside the city, between two malefactors who for many robberies and murders are likewise condemned to death, be nailed to the Cross, and their death thus accomplished. Given at Jerusalem, on the eve of the Passover.

Pilate [breaks his staff] — Now take Him hence, and — crucify Him!

[*He turns hastily and almost rushes into the house.*]

Caiaphas — Triumph! Victory is ours! The Enemy of the synagogue is destroyed!

Priests and People — Away with him to Golgotha!

The People — Long live the synagogue!

Priests and Pharisees — Long live the nation!

Annas — Make haste, that we may return home at the right time to eat the Passover lamb !

Priests and Pharisees — With joy shall we keep this feast of the Passover, even as our fathers in Egypt !

Caiaphas — Let our triumphal procession go through the midst of Jerusalem.

Rabbi — Where are His followers ? They are invited to cry Hosanna !

The People [going away] — Up and away ! To Golgotha ! Come and see Him, how He will die upon the Cross ! O day of joy, the Enemy of Moses is cast down ! So let it be to him who despises the law ! He deserves the death of the Cross ! Auspicious Passover ! Now doth joy return to Israel ! There is an end of the Galilæan ! [*Exeunt in a tumultuous procession.*]

PART III.

ACT XV.

The Way of the Cross.

PROLOGUE.

The extorted condemnation has been pronounced. Now we see Jesus fainting on the way to the Mount of Golgotha, laden with the beam of the Cross. Isaac also once bore willingly upon his own shoulders the wood for the offering to the mountain where he was to bleed as a sacrifice according to the word of Jehovah. Jesus also bears willingly the wood of the Cross, which through the offering of holy love will now soon become a Tree of Life rich in blessing. For as a glance at the brazen serpent set up in the wilderness brought healing, so comfort and blessing come to us from the Tree of the Cross.

Chorus —

Pray, and render heartfelt thanks !
He who drank the cup of pain
To the Cross of death now goes,
Reconciles the world with God.

First Tableau : ISAAC bearing the Wood up Mount Moriah.

Chorus —

E'en as the wood for sacrifice
Isaac himself to Moriah bore,

With His Cross laden, Jesus faints,
 Yet bears it on to Golgotha.
 Pray, and render heartfelt thanks, etc.

Second Tableau: The Brazen Serpent.

Chorus —

Nailed, and raised upon the Cross
 Soon will be the Son of man.
 Here in Moses' serpent see
 Type already of the Cross.
 Pray, and render heartfelt thanks, etc.

Third Tableau: The Children of Israel around the Brazen Serpent.

Chorus —

From the pois'nous serpent's bite
 Were the people healed through this!
 So will from the Cross to us
 Healing flow and blessedness.
 Pray, and render heartfelt thanks, etc.

SCENE I.

The HOLY WOMEN with JOHN and JOSEPH of Arimathea coming from Bethany.

Mary [to JOHN] — O beloved disciple, how has it gone with my Jesus?

John — If the priests could do as they willed, so were He surely already amongst the dead, but they dare not carry out the sentence without permission of the Governor, and Pilate, I hope, will not condemn Him, since He hath ever only done good.

Magdalene — The Lord guide the heart of the Governor!

Mary — O friends, whither shall we go, that I may again see my Son?

Joseph — There is no one to be seen from whom we could obtain tidings.

John — It will be best to go to Nicodemus, who surely knows how it is with the Master.

Mary — Yea, let us go thither. Every moment increases my anguish.

John — Be strong in faith, beloved Mother. [Cries are heard, "On, on with Him!" It is the people urging on JESUS, who has fallen under His burden.]

Joseph — What fearful tumult is that?

[*They stand still, listening.*]

SCENE II.

The procession of the Cross-bearing, PRIESTS, PHARISEES, PEOPLE, SOLDIERS, half in the "Street of Annas," turning slowly into the foreground. In front the CENTURION with the staff of command, a horseman in the group with the Roman banner. CHRIST painfully dragging the Cross, nearest to Him the FOUR EXECUTIONERS.

People — Let Him die, and all who hold with Him!

First Executioner — Is the burden already too heavy for Thee?

People — Urge Him on with force that we may get to Calvary!

Second Executioner — Hold hard, He will come down again!

[*The group in the "Street of Pilate" know not yet what is going on.*]

Joseph — What shall we do? With this crowd we cannot venture ourselves in the city.

Mary — What may this tumult signify? Can it possibly concern my Son?

Joseph — It seems as if an insurrection had broken out.

John — We will keep quiet here until the storm has blown over.

Simon of Cyrene [*comes hastily and anxiously from the middle street to the foreground, carrying a basket*] — I must hasten in order to get into the city. The eve of the feast is on the decline, and I must yet make purchases.

Priests and People [*still unseen by SIMON*] — Let Him not rest! Urge Him on with blows!

Simon — What an outcry! I will keep myself quiet.

Third Executioner — Thy fainting avails Thee nothing. Thou must get out to Golgotha.

Ahasuerus [*coming quickly out of his house*] — Away from my house! This is no place for repose.

Simon — The tumult becomes greater. — Who comes there? I will await the event.

SCENE III.

The procession with CHRIST has at last come to the front. Meanwhile from the middle street VERONICA and the WOMEN OF JERUSALEM draw near.

John — It seems that some one is led out to execution at Calvary.

Mary [*sees JESUS*] — It is He! O God, it is my Son! [*Those around JESUS push Him on.*]

Executioner — He delays us on the road.

Centurion [*to JESUS, who in uttermost weariness has again fallen fainting*] — Here, refresh Thyself! [*He hands Him a flask, JESUS takes it, but does not drink.*]

Mary — Ah, see Him thus led to death, like to a malefactor, between two malefactors!

John — Mother, it is the hour of which He spoke before; thus it is the Father's will.

Centurion — Wilt Thou not drink? Then force Him on.

Fourth Executioner [*shakes JESUS*] — Bestir Thyself, lazy King of the Jews.

Second Executioner — Up, pull Thyself together!

Third Executioner — Do not act so weakly, we must get on.

Mary — Oh, where is any sorrow like unto my sorrow!

Third Executioner — He is too much exhausted; some one must help, otherwise —

Rabbi [*pointing out SIMON*] — Here, this stranger —

Pharisee — Lay hold on him!

Centurion — Come hither, thou hast broad shoulders.

Simon — I must —

Fourth Executioner — Indeed thou must, or there will be blows.

Pharisee — Beat him if he will not go.

Simon — I am indeed innocent, I have committed no crime.

Executioner — Silence!

Simon [*observing CHRIST*] — What do I see? that is the Holy Man of Nazareth!

Second Executioner — Thy shoulders here!

Simon — For love of Thee will I bear it. O that I could thereby make myself worthy in Thy sight!

Christ [*standing exhausted at one side*] — God's blessing upon thee and thine.

Executioner — Forward now, do Thou follow after with the beam of the Cross!

First Priest [to CHRIST] — Now canst Thou step on quickly.

Third Executioner [seizing JESUS by the neck and shaking Him] — See how we are kept back by Thee, even though the instrument of punishment be taken off Thee!

Second Executioner — Dost Thou need anything more?

Executioner — Let Him alone; we will wait a little longer yet that He may revive before we go up the hill.

[VERONICA and the WOMEN OF JERUSALEM approach the procession.

Caiaphas — Another stoppage already? When shall we get to Calvary?

Veronica [kneeling before JESUS and offering Him a napkin] — O Lord, how is Thy countenance covered with blood and sweat? Wilt Thou not wipe it?

Christ [wipes His face and gives her back the cloth] — Compassionate soul, the Father will recompense thee for it.

Women of Jerusalem [kneeling with their little ones before the LORD] — Thou good Master, never-to-be-forgotten Benefactor, noblest Friend of men, thus art Thou recompensed!

[*They weep.*

Christ — Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For behold, the days are coming in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps that never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

Centurion — Now remove the women folk.

Third Executioner — What good are your women's tears? Back!

Second and Fourth Executioners — Away with Him to the hill of death!

People — Up briskly to Calvary!

Rabbi — Is the thing ever to go on?

Nathanael — The Centurion is quite too merciful.

Priest — He does not spare his soldiers so much.

[*The procession begins to move forward; the SERVANT OF PILATE appears.*

SCENE IV.

Pilate's Servant — Hold! By the Governor's command the Centurion is immediately to appear before him and to receive further directions. [*The procession stops.*]

Caiaphas — What is this? Wherefore any new directions? The sentence of death is pronounced and must be carried out without delay.

Centurion [sternly] — No, this cannot be, until I shall have received the orders of my lord. [*To the SOLDIERS.*] Keep ye watch meanwhile, and go on with the condemned towards Golgotha. Then dismiss this man [*pointing to SIMON*] and await my arrival.

[*Exit with the SERVANT. The procession moves forward again towards the middle of the background.*]

People [wildly one to another] — Up to Golgotha! Crucify Him! Hail to Israel, the Enemy is overcome! We are set free, long live the Sanhedrim!

John — Mother, shall we not return to Bethany? Thou wilt not be able to bear the sight.

Mary — How could a mother leave her child in the last bitterest need! I will suffer with Him, with Him bear scorn and shame — die with Him!

John — If only strength of body do not fail.

Mary — Fear not. I have prayed to God for strength, the Lord hath heard me. Let us follow after.

All — Dearest Mother, we follow thee. [*They slowly follow the procession.*]

ACT XVI.

JESUS on Calvary.

PROLOGUE.

Chorus [clothed in black] —

Up, pious souls, arise and go
Full of remorse, of pain, and thanks,
With me to Golgotha, and see
What for your saving here befell.
There dies the Daysman between God
And sinners, the atoning death.

Ah! naked, only clothed with wounds
Here lies He on the Cross for thee;

The vengeance of the wicked gloats,
 Malicious, o'er His nakedness,
 And He, who thee, O sinner, loves,
 Is silent, suffers, and forgives.

I hear His limbs already crack,
 As they from out their joints are dragged;
 Whose heart doth it not cause to quake
 When he the hammer's stroke doth hear,
 Whose ringing blows, through hands and feet,
 Alas! the cruel nails must drive?

The blows of the hammer are heard behind the scenes. The curtain rises; CHRIST lies upon the Cross.

Choragus [intones, accompanied by soft music] —

Up, pious souls, draw near the Lamb
 Who freely gives Himself for you.
 Behold Him on the Tree of Doom,
 See how He hangs 'twixt murderers,
 He, Son of God, His life-blood gives.
 And ye no tears give back to Him?

Himself His murderers to forgive,
 We hear Him to the Father pray;
 And soon, O soon, He ends His life,
 That we eternal death may 'scape.
 His side a spear doth pierce full sore,
 And opes to us His heart still more.

Choragus [sings] —

O who can this high love conceive
 Which loveth even unto death,
 And blessing e'en the murd'rous band,
 Instead of hating, pardons them?

The whole Chorus —

O bring to this great Love
 But pious heart's emotion,
 Upon the altar of the Cross
 To the great offering there.

SCENE I.

The scene is in the middle of the stage. As the curtain rises, the two crosses with the malefactors are raised. CHRIST lies, nailed to His Cross, on the ground. LICTORS, EXECUTION-

ERS, HIGH PRIESTS, PHARISEES, PEOPLE; *in the background the HOLY WOMEN, with JOHN, JOSEPH, and NICODEMUS.*

The Executioners [*pointing to the THIEVES*] — We have already finished with these. Now must the King of the Jews be also raised on high upon His throne.

Priest — Not King! — Deceiver! Chief traitor!

Centurion — First, however, this writing must, according to the Governor's order, be fastened to the Cross. Faustus! fasten this escutcheon over the Cross.

Faustus — A shield exposed to public view! Ha, that is truly regal! [*He fastens on the writing.*]

Centurion — Now lay hold, and raise the Cross! only not carelessly!

Third Executioner — Come, redouble your efforts! [*They raise it.*]

Fourth Executioner — All right, the Cross stands firm!

Centurion — The painful act is accomplished.

Caiaphas — And truly admirably accomplished. Thanks and applause from us all.

Pharisee — Thanks and applause from us all.

Caiaphas — This day shall be forever a feast day.

Pharisee — Yea, it will be solemnly kept for all time to come.

Annas — And I will now willingly go down to my fathers, since I have lived to have the joy of seeing this wretch upon the Cross. But the writing upon the Cross seems to me to be very briefly composed.

Rabbi [*going closer*] — That is an affront to the Sanhedrim and to the people!

Caiaphas — What is written?

Rabbi — It reads thus: Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews! [*The FOUR EXECUTIONERS lie down under the Cross.*]

Caiaphas [*reads*] — Truly the honor of the nation is therein touched.

Priest — Let the writing be torn down.

Caiaphas — We dare not ourselves lay hands on it. [*To TWO PRIESTS.*] Go to the Governor and demand, in the name of the Sanhedrim and of the assembled people, the alteration of this writing. He should write that He *said*, — I am the King of the Jews. Then also present a petition that before the great

eve of the feast the bones of the crucified be broken and their bodies taken down. [*Exit the Two PRIESTS.*]

Third Executioner — Now, comrades, let us divide what has fallen to us. [*He takes up the coat and the mantle of CHRIST.*] See, the mantle makes just four parts. [*The FOUR EXECUTIONERS seize the mantle and tear it, with one pull, into four pieces.*] But the coat is not sewn together. Shall we cut it also in pieces?

Second Executioner — No; it is better that we cast lots for it.

First Executioner — Here are dice. I will at once try my luck. [*He throws.*] That is too little. I have lost.

Third Executioner [*looking up to CHRIST*] — What? If Thou canst work a miracle upon the Cross, then give luck to my throw. [*He throws.*]

The other Executioners — What does He know about us?

Fourth Executioner — I ought to be luckier. Fifteen! Very good. Now do thou try it!

Second Executioner — I must get it. [*He throws.*]

Third Executioner [*looking at the dice*] — Eighteen! That is the highest.

First Executioner — It is thine, take it away.

Fourth Executioner — Thou art not at all to be envied about it.

Rabbi [*returning from PILATE*] — Our embassy was fruitless. He would not listen to us.

Caiaphas — Did he give you no answer?

Rabbi — This only: "What I have written, I have written."

Annas [*aside*] — Intolerable!

Caiaphas — What answer did he give you concerning breaking the bones?

Rabbi — Concerning that, he said he would give his orders to the Centurion.

Priest [*to CHRIST*] — Therefore the writing remains: King of the Jews. Ah, if Thou art a King in Israel, come down now from the Cross, that we may see it and believe on Thee.

Second Priest — Thou that destroyest the Temple and buildest it in three days, save Thyself!

Caiaphas — Ah, Thou hast saved others, Thyself Thou canst not save.

The False Witnesses — Come down, for Thou art the Son of God!

Annas — He trusted in God: let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him.

Fourth Executioner — What! dost Thou not hear?

First and Third Executioners — Show Thy power, mighty King of the Jews!

Christ [*whose head during the whole time has hung motionless, now turns it painfully*] — Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!

The Thief on the left [*to CHRIST*] — Hearest Thou? If Thou art the Christ, save Thyself and us.

The Thief on the right [*to him on the left*] — Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due rewards of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss. Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.

Christ — Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise. [*MARY and JOHN draw near to the Cross.*]

Caiaphas — Listen, He still goes on as though it were His to command at the doors of paradise!

Rabbi — His presumption has not yet left Him, now that He hangs helpless upon the Cross!

Christ — Woman, behold thy Son! Son, behold Thy Mother!

Mary — Thus dying Thou carest still for Thy Mother!

John — Sacred to me be Thy last will! Thou my mother! And I thy son!

Christ [*with signs of the approaching end*] — I thirst.

Centurion — He suffers thirst and asks for drink.

Second Executioner — I will quickly reach it to Him. [*He takes the reed with the sponge, upon which the Centurion pours from his flask; CHRIST sips from the sponge.*] Here, drink!

Christ [*with the expression of deepest anguish*] — Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?

Pharisee and People — See, He calleth Elias!

Caiaphas — Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save Him.

Christ [*breathing heavily several times*] — It is finished! Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit. [*He slowly droops His head and dies. Thunder is heard; it becomes dark.*]

Priests and People — What a fearful earthquake! Hear ye the crash of the falling rocks? Woo to us!

Centurion — Certainly this was a righteous man!

Soldiers — The Godhead Himself bears Him witness through these terrors of nature!

Centurion — This patience in fiercest pains, this noble calm, this loud devout cry to Heaven in the moment before His departure — all makes one augurate something higher. Truly He is the Son of God !

People — Come, neighbors, I will remain no longer in this place of horrors. Let us return home. God be gracious to us !

Others [*smiting on their breasts*] — Almighty One ! we have sinned ! [*The PEOPLE disperse with signs of sorrow and remorse.*

Servant of the Temple [*enters hastily*] — High Priest and assembled Council ! In the holy place a fearful event has happened ! I tremble in every limb.

Caiaphas — What is it ? not the Temple —

Annas — Thrown down ?

Servant — Not that, but the veil of the Temple is rent in twain from the top to the bottom. It seemed as though the whole earth were split asunder.

Priests and Pharisees — Terrible !

Caiaphas [*pointing to the dead JESUS*] — This has that wretch done for us through His enchantments ! It is well that He is out of the world, else would He bring all the elements into disorder.

Priests and Pharisees — Curse upon Him, who is in league with Beelzebub !

Caiaphas — Let us go home with haste and see what has happened ; then will we immediately return hither again. For I have no rest until I have seen that the legs of this man be broken, and His Body thrown into the malefactor's grave !

[*Exeunt the PRIESTS.*

SCENE II.

Nicodemus [*to JOSEPH of Arimathea*] — Shall then the holy body of the God-sent be so fearfully dishonored as to be thrown into the malefactor's grave ?

Joseph — Friend, hear my resolve. I will go straightway to Pilate and will earnestly beg of him that he will give me the Body of Jesus. This favor he will not deny me.

Nicodemus — Do so, friend ! I will bring spices to embalm Him. [*Exeunt.*

Centurion [*to the HOLY WOMEN*] — Fear ye not, good women. No evil shall befall you.

Magdalene [clasping the Cross] — O most beloved Teacher, my heart hangs with Thee upon the Cross!

Servant of Pilate [entering, to the CENTURION] — By order of my lord, the crucified are to have their legs broken. And then their bodies are to be taken down. Before the beginning of the great eve all must be over.

Centurion — It will be done at once. Fellows, break first the bones of these two.

Third Executioner — Let us bring this heart-breaking business quickly to an end.

Second Executioner [who has gone up a ladder to the THIEF on the right hand, and with four blows of a club broken his legs] — He wakes no more!

Fourth Executioner [goes up to the THIEF on the left hand] — The other will I hasten out of the world.

Mary [shuddering] — Ah, Jesus, they will not surely deal so horribly with Thy Holy Body?

Fourth Executioner [to the THIEF on the left hand] — Movest thou not any more? No; he has his wages!

Magdalene [as the EXECUTIONER with a club goes towards CHRIST] — Ah, spare Him! spare Him!

Third Executioner [looking up to CHRIST] — He is already deceased. Breaking His legs is no longer necessary.

Second Executioner — In order that we may be quite sure of His death, I will open His heart with a spear. [*He pierces JESUS in the side; the blood flows out.*]

The Holy Women — Ah!

Magdalene — O mother! This wound has also pierced thy heart!

Centurion — Now take the Body from the Cross!

First Executioner — Whither then with it?

Centurion — As it is ordered — into the criminal's grave.

Mary — What a fearful word!

Fourth Executioner — Ladders here! They will soon be taken down!

Magdalene [to the CENTURION] — May we not then once show the last honors to our Friend?

Centurion — Unhappily it lies not in my power to fulfill your wish.

Second Executioner [to the FIRST, who stands upon the ladder] — Go thou up, I will hold.

Third Executioner — And I will look after the others. [*He mounts the ladder.*]

SCENE III.

The PRIESTS return to Golgotha.

Caiaphas [*entering at the head of the PRIESTS*] — It will be the more grateful to us to see the Body of the wretch thrown into the grave of shame, that we have beheld the destruction which He has brought to pass in the Temple.

Annas — It would rejoice mine eyes to see His limbs torn asunder by wild beasts!

Caiaphas — See, they have been already taken down. So we shall see our wish fulfilled at once.

Pilate's Servant [*entering with JOSEPH of Arimathea, to the CENTURION*] — The Governor hath sent me to inquire of thee whether Jesus of Nazareth be indeed dead already, as this man here hath told him.

Centurion — It is so ; see for thyself.

Servant — Then I am commissioned to announce to thee that His Body is to be delivered over to this man as a gift from the Governor. [*Exit.*]

The Holy Women — O comfortable tidings !

Rabbi [*looking towards JOSEPH of Arimathea*] — The betrayer of the synagogue ! So he has again worked secretly !

Annas — And destroyed our joy !

Caiaphas [*to the CENTURION*] — Nevertheless, we will not consent that He be laid in any other place than with the malefactors.

Centurion — Since the Body is given to this man it goes without saying that he can bury it how and where he wishes. This allows of no objection. [*To the SOLDIERS and EXECUTIONERS.*] Men ! our business is ended, we will return home.

Annas [*to JOSEPH of Arimathea*] — Thou persistest, then, in thy stubbornness ? Art thou not ashamed to honor, even in His corpse, a condemned Criminal ?

Joseph — I honor the most virtuous of men, the God-sent Teacher, the innocent, murdered One !

Nicodemus — Envy and pride were the motives of His condemnation. The judge himself was forced to testify His innocence ; he swore that he would have no part in His blood.

Caiaphas. — The curse of the law will bring you to destruction, ye enemies of our fathers !

Rabbi — Do not excite thyself, High Priest; they are smitten with blindness!

Caiaphas — Cursed be ye by the whole Council! Bereft of your dignities, never more shall ye dare to appear in our midst!

Nicodemus — We also desire never more to do so.

Annas [*coming forward with the PRIESTS*] — As the Body is in the hands of His friends, we must be on our guard, since this Deceiver said in His lifetime that after three days He would rise again.

Rabbi — How easily could a new trick be played upon the people, and fresh embarrassment be prepared for us! His disciples could take Him away secretly and then spread abroad the saying that He had risen.

Caiaphas — Then were the last error worse than the first. Let us then go immediately to Pilate and ask from him a guard of soldiers, so that the grave may be watched until the third day.

Annas — A prudent thought!

Rabbi — Thus will their plans be brought to nothing.

[*Exeunt the PRIESTS.*]

SCENE IV.

The taking down from the Cross, and the Burial.

Magdalene — At length they have gone, the madmen! Be comforted, beloved Mother! The mocking and the blasphemy are over, and a holy evening calm surrounds us.

Mary — He has finished it; He has departed into the rest of the Father.

Magdalene — He has not been torn from us forever; that is His own promise!

Mary [*to the men busied about the taking down from the Cross*] — Generous men! Bring quickly to me the Body of my beloved child!

Salome — Come, my companions, prepare this winding-sheet to receive it. [*They place MARY upon a stone and spread out the winding-sheet at her feet.*]

Joseph [*taking the Body of JESUS upon his shoulders*] — O sweet, O holy burden, rest upon my shoulders! [*He lifts the Body down.*]

Pilgrims to a Wonder-working Shrine

From the painting by Carl L. N. Bantzer



Nicodemus [*stretching out his arms to receive the Body*] —
Come, Holy Body of my only Friend! Let me embrace Thee!
How hath the fury of Thy enemies lacerated Thee! [*The Body
is placed leaning on MARY'S breast.*]

John — Here shall the Best of sons rest once more in the
bosom of the Best of mothers.

Mary — O my Son, how is Thy Body covered with wounds!

John — Mother, from these wounds flow healing and blessing
for mankind.

Magdalene — Behold, Mother, Heaven's peace rests upon the
dead countenance!

Nicodemus — Let us anoint Him and wrap Him in this new
winding-sheet.

Joseph — He shall be laid in my new grave which I have
prepared for myself in the rocky cave in my garden.

Salome — Best of Masters! One more loving tear upon
Thy lifeless Body!

Magdalene — O let me kiss once more the hand which so
often blessed me!

John — We shall see Him again!

Joseph [*to NICODEMUS*] — Do thou help me to bear Him
into the garden.

Nicodemus — I am blessed, since I may lay to rest the remains
of Him who was sent from God.

[*They bear the Body to the grave.*]

John — Let us follow.

Mary — It is the last service which I can do to my Jesus.

[*They all follow. The grave is seen in the background.*]

All — Friend, rest softly in the still grave hewn out in the
rock!

John — Now will we return home. Come, dearest Mother!

[*Exit with the WOMEN.*]

Joseph — Let us close up the grave with this stone; help
me.

Nicodemus — After the feast day we will finish the work of
love.

Joseph — Come now, O friend, to lament His death.

Nicodemus — Oh how can this man, full of grace and truth,
have deserved such a fate!

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT XVII.

The Resurrection.

PROLOGUE.

All is now accomplished. Peace and joy ! His strife hath brought us freedom ; His death hath brought us life. O let the heart of the redeemed glow with thankfulness and love ! The holy One rests in the tomb. Yet for shortest rest. For the Anointed One cannot see corruption ; alive again, He will arise. Jonas, God's prophet, after three days came out of the fish's belly. Israel went victoriously through the waves of the sea, which swallowed up the enemy that followed. So will the Lord mightily burst the gates of death, shining out of darkness in glorious light, and arise, to the confusion of His enemies, in exceeding majesty.

Chorus —

Love ! O Love ! in Thy dear blood
 Thou didst strive with God's own pow'r
 All Thy mighty combat through.
 Love ! Thou gav'st Thyself Thy life
 For us sinners willingly :
 Ever 'fore our eyes shall float
 Higher sense of all Thy love.
 Softly now, O Sacred Frame,
 Rest in stillness of the grave,
 All Thy bitter passion o'er !
 In earth's lap, oh, softly rest
 Till Thy glory be revealed.
 Never shall corruption's worm
 Touch or mar Thy holy flesh.

First Tableau : JONAH cast by the Whale upon Dry Land.

As Jonah once within the fish
 So in earth's bosom now doth rest
 The Son of man — But with one breath
 He breaks His bonds and the sealed tomb.

Victory ! vict'ry ! He will rise,
 As Jonah from the fish's maw,
 So also will the Son of man
 Go forth to life from out the grave.

Second Tableau: The EGYPTIANS drowned in the Red Sea.

Great is the Lord! His goodness great
 Accepted hath He now His own.
 He led once through the waters' midst
 His Israel on the firm, dry ground.

Triumph, for He who died will rise;
 Death's darkness covers Him no more,
 New living, He through His own might
 Will Victor from the grave go forth.

SCENE I.

The WATCH sitting or lying about the grave.

Watch [one after another] — Brother, how goes it with thee? I shall soon find it too wearisome to guard a dead body. — This tedious office of watching the dead, which the priests have put upon us! — Have patience, it is the last night. — But it is truly laughable how this people still fear even the dead. — The Man out of Nazareth must have said that He would rise again on the third day. Hence their anxiety! — If He is really a higher Being, who will then hinder His resurrection? Certainly we cannot! — Who could withstand the will of God, if He willed to permit any one to return from the underworld? They fear that His disciples will take away the Body, and that then they can say that He is risen; to prevent this are we sent to watch. — Then they may be without anxiety. They are not thinking of it. That would give us a fine hare-hunt! We have been told how bravely they behaved in the olive garden. — The glow of morning is beginning already. [*Earthquake.*] What a fearful earthquake! Ye gods! Away from the rock! it totters, it falls in! [*An ANGEL rolls away the stone. CHRIST arises.*] Immortal gods, what do I see! I am blinded! [*They fall to the ground.*] The appearance is gone! — I saw at the grave a Figure like that of a man, but His face was dazzling as the lightning. Higher powers are at work here. — The grave is open! I see no corpse. He must be risen! He has fulfilled His word. We will hasten to the high priests, and relate the whole occurrence to them.

SCENE II.

The HOLY WOMEN at the grave.

Magdalene [*hastening on before the others*] — How does my heart rejoice to show even this honor to the Beloved!

The other Women — Who shall roll us away the stone?

Magdalene [*comes from the grave*] — O sisters, what have I seen! They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre!

Women — O God!

Magdalene — I will go at once to Peter and John and bring them these sorrowful tidings. [*Exit.*]

Women — Alas, the last consolation is thus taken from us! — Perchance Joseph hath laid Him in another grave. — If only the enemies have not stolen Him away. — Let us see ourselves. [*They go to the grave.*] I see not the Sacred Body. Oh, I am affrighted!

Angel [*appearing at the door of the sepulchre*] — Fear not! Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen, and is no longer here. Go and tell His disciples and Peter that the Lord goeth before you into Galilee. There shall ye see Him as He said unto you. [*Exit.*]

Women [*departing hastily in terror, then recollecting themselves*] — What a heavenly message! He is risen! Let us hasten and bring the tidings to all the disciples which the Angel hath brought to us. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

The PRIESTS and the WATCH.

Caiaphas — It cannot possibly have happened as the watch declared. [*He goes quickly to the grave.*] It is true! The stone is rolled away, the sepulchre is empty! [*To the WATCH.*] How did this happen? Confess, or the most fearful punishment awaits you!

Watch — We can say nothing different from what we have already reported.

Pharisees — Ye lie!

Watch — But how could any one have entered, when the door was closed and we sat around the sepulchre?

Caiaphas — Ye are yourselves in the plot.

Annas — Why did ye not at once raise an alarm?

Watch — When a thunderbolt had stricken us to earth!

Rabbi — Whither was the Body taken away?

Watch — That we know not. He is risen as ye feared. We are going to Pilate, who shall decide, and in the whole city will we make known what we have seen.

Caiaphas [*whispers to the PRIESTS*] — We must keep them back. [*To the WATCH.*] Believe what ye will. Meanwhile, it is our duty to see that the event remain in obscurity. Your silence shall bring you a rich reward.

Watch — But the thing will become known, and for such a deception Pilate would punish us severely.

Annas — For that leave us to take thought.

Caiaphas [*gives money to the WATCH*] — We will answer for you to Pilate.

Watch [*taking the money*] — But if we are questioned?

Caiaphas — Then say ye only: His disciples came while we slept and stole Him away.

Watch — Then take back your money! For such words Pilate would the most severely punish us.

Caiaphas — I will answer for it to you in the name of the whole Council, that ye shall come off unpunished.

Pharisee — Be without anxiety and be silent.

Watch — We will be silent.

[*Exeunt.*]

Caiaphas [*to his followers*] — Now seize every opportunity to spread abroad among the people that the Body was taken away by His followers. The victory is ours, the Enemy is dead. His Body may lie where it will! In a few years will the name of the Nazarene be forgotten, or only named with scorn. His work is at an end.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

JOHN, PETER, MAGDALENE, *then* CHRIST *and* an ANGEL.

John — I will convince myself whether Mary saw rightly. [*He looks into the sepulchre.*] It is empty! But to enter it I dare not.

Peter — We must, however, search more closely [*coming out of the grave*]. Behold thyself, John, how orderly the napkins are folded together by themselves. All is arranged in the grave as when one who arises from sleep lays his night-garments in the appointed place.

John — O Simon, what thoughts do thy words awaken in

me! Is the Lord perchance arisen from death as from a gentle sleep?

Peter — If that were true! But I never took that prophecy to the letter.

John — I doubt no longer!

Peter — God grant it! We will now hasten to our brethren and bring them this consolation. Mary, comest thou not with us?

Magdalene — Let me weep here alone!

John — Do not linger too long, Mary! [*Exit with PETER.*]

Magdalene — Now flow down, O tears!

Angel [*appearing at the sepulchre*] — Woman, why weepest thou?

Magdalene — Alas, they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him.

Christ [*appearing amongst the trees*] — Woman, why weepest thou?

Magdalene — Sir, if thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him.

Christ — Mary!

Magdalene — Oh, that is His voice! Rabboni!

Christ — Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father. But go to my brethren, and say unto them: I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God! [*He disappears.*]

Magdalene — O my Master! He hath vanished. But I have seen Him — hath heard the beloved voice! Now depart hence, sorrow and sadness! I will hasten as upon wings to the brethren, and will announce to them the greeting of the risen One! Oh that I could proclaim it throughout all worlds, that mountains and floods, heaven and earth, might reëcho. Hallelujah, He is risen!

THE LAST SCENE.

PROLOGUE.

He is risen! Rejoice, ye Heavens! He is risen! Rejoice, ye mortals! The Lion of the tribe of Judah! He hath bruised the serpent's head. Faith stands firm! The fore-image and pledge of our future resurrection awakes joyful hope in our heart. Cry with the voice of rejoicing, Hallelujah! We saw Him enter into Jerusalem in humility, and, ah! for the deepest humiliation. Now let us behold, before we separate, the victorious solemnity of the Conqueror! Now He ascends to the highest glory, full of majesty, to the New

Jerusalem, where He will gather to Himself all whom He hath purchased with His blood. Strengthened and full of joy at this sight, return to your homes, O friends, filled with inmost love for Him who loved you even unto death, and still in heaven everlastingly loves you—there, where the eternal song of triumph resounds: Praise be to the Lamb which was slain! There, reunited around our Saviour, we shall all meet again! Hallelujah!

Chorus —

Hallelujah!
 The Hero hath conquered
 The might of the foe!
 Few hours in the grave—
 In the gloom hath He slept!
 Sing to Him in holy Psalms!
 Strew before Him Conqueror's palms!
 The Lord He hath risen!
 Rejoice, O ye Heavens!
 Sing, Earth, to the Victor!
 To Thee who hast risen
 Hallelujah!

Last Tableau: CHRIST in Glory; His Enemies under His Feet.

Chorus —

Praise Him, Conqueror of Death,
 Once condemned on Gabbatha!
 Praise Him, amidst sinners Holy,
 Who for us on Calvary died!
 Bring your praises to the Highest,
 To the Lamb who once was slain!
 Hallelujah!
 Who victorious from the grave
 Goes in triumph up on high.
 Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
 Let our harps in concert ring,
 Joy through every spirit thrill!
 To the Victor crowns now bring,
 Who arose and lives for aye.
 Bring your praises to the Highest, etc.
 Praises sing, all Heavenly hosts!
 Praise and glory to the Lord!
 Worship, might, and power and praise
 Be to Him for evermore!
 Bring your praises to the Highest, etc.

SAPPHO.

By FRANZ GRILLPARZER.

[FRANZ GRILLPARZER, the chief of Austrian dramatists, was the child of a union which has produced hosts of eminent men, and by rights ought always to produce them, — a stern and high-principled father with a sensitive and beauty-loving mother, giving power and continuity to sensibility and artistic feeling. Macaulay, Victor Hugo, and Henry Ward Beecher will be readily recalled. Grillparzer's father was a lawyer in Vienna, where the boy was born January 15, 1791; his mother was a musical devotee who finally took her own life. A tutor for two years, from 1813 to 1856, he was in the public service, becoming director of the archives, and retiring on a pension in 1856. But his real life was in his writings. He was born for literature, was drawn to the drama by nature and the great popularity of the "fate tragedies" of the time, and was especially enamored of Calderon, whose influence is plain in his work, one of his pieces being imitated even to the title from "Life is a Dream." He wrote tragedies when a mere boy: but the first of any moment, "The Ancestress," was published in 1816; its theme is a family curse as in the Greek tragedies. It was very popular, and in 1819 he published "Sappho," still ranked as his masterpiece; it was an attempt to charge ancient classic form with modern romantic feeling and richness of detail. It raised him at once to the front rank of European poets. Byron predicting immortality for it from reading an Italian translation of it. Another classical work, the trilogy "The Golden Fleece," came out in 1822. He next turned to national history, and in 1825 published "King Ottocar's Fortune and End," of the times of Rudolf I., the founder of the House of Hapsburg; and in 1830 "A Faithful Servant of His Lord," which had the odd fate of incensing the Liberals as too servile to the court and being prohibited by the court as incendiary. In 1840 he produced no less than three, which were his swan songs: "Love Billows and Sea Billows," on the story of Hero and Leander — second if not first, in real merit, among his works; "The Dream, a Life," inverted from Calderon; and a comedy, "Woe to Him who Lies," which was damned, and he wrote no more for the stage, though he left several to be published posthumously. He wrote also much lyric verse; several stories, the chief being "The Minstrel"; and an autobiography, written in 1853, but telling the story of his life only to 1836. After ceasing to write for the stage he had been nearly forgotten, when a Vienna manager revived some of his works: they had magnificent success, and he was loaded with honors as the great Austrian national poet; a magnificent ovation was given him on his eightieth birthday. He died in Vienna, January 21, 1872.]

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

SAPPHO.

PHAON.

EUPHARIS, } servants of Sappho.
MELITTA, }

RHAMNES, a slave, Sappho's steward.

A COUNTRYMAN; MAIDENS, SERVANTS, COUNTRY PEOPLE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

An extensive plain. The sea forms the background, now crimsoned by the dawn. The shore, level in part, rises upon the left into rocky precipices. Near these, upon the shore, stands a white marble altar to the goddess Aphrodite. Upon the right of the foreground is the entrance to a grotto, wreathed with ivy and other climbing plants; beyond which a marble colonnade, with steps, forms the entrance to SAPPHO'S dwelling. On the left, rose trees, thickly laden with roses, overhang a bank of green turf. Flutes and timbrels, and a confused sound of voices and jubilees, are heard in the distance.

RHAMNES comes from the palace of SAPPHO.

Rhamnes —

Awake! from sleep awake! She comes! she comes!
O that my wishes winged were, and bore
My aged feet, my beating heart, to hers!
Up, idle maidens! why do you delay?
It suits you not — for youth is ever active!

EUCHARIS, MELITTA, and SAPPHO'S other Maidens enter.

Melitta —

Why scold you thus? here are we all assembled!

Rhamnes —

Behold! she comes!

Melitta —

Ye gods! who comes?

Rhamnes —

Sappho

Draws near.

[Shouts from within] —

Hail! Sappho, hail! queen of our hearts!

Rhamnes [from within] —

Brave people, it is well! Hail! Sappho, hail!

Melitta [coming forward] —

What means this joy?

Rhamnes —

Now, by the gods, you ask!

Thus coolly asks the maiden! Sappho returns!

Bearing the crown from High Olympus! There

Has she gained the wreath of victory!

In sight of all assembled Greece, to her

Was given the glorious prize, the prize

Of poesy; therefore the people hasten,

And joyously they send upon their wings,

Their jubilee's broad wings, the name of her,
Whose glory is their honor.

This was the hand,
And these the lips, that first unlocked the sounds,
And taught her youth the language of the lyre!
Taught her the freedom of her muse to bind
In bonds of flowery sweetness!

The People [*from without*] — Hail! Sappho!

Rhamnes [*to Melitta*] —

How they rejoice! See you the crown?

Melitta —

Sappho

Alone I see. Let us to meet her there!

Rhamnes —

Remain, remain! What signifies your joy?
Her ears have heard sweeter applause than thine.
Prepare the dwelling for her gracious use.
By serving only, honors her the slave!

Melitta [*after a pause*] —

Ah! at her side! behold!

Rhamnes —

What dost thou see?

Melitta —

A shining form stands by her side! Ah, thus
They paint Apollo, god of the bow and lyre.

Rhamnes —

I see! but go not yet.

Melitta —

Ah, why delay?

Rhamnes —

Your duty, know you not, lies in your home;
Within the house expands the truest joy.
To greet the loved one with loud jubilee
Belongs to us, while quietly the slave
Toils in her home.

Melitta [*impatiently*] — Now let us go.

Rhamnes —

Not yet —

[*After a pause*] —

Now forth! now forth!

[*Female attendants rush out.*]

Now they may forth. Their joy,

Their childish joy, disturbs not now the love,

The general jubilee of love!

SAPPHO, splendidly dressed, approaches upon an open car drawn by white horses. She holds the golden lyre in her hand, and wears upon her head the crown of victory. PHAON, in the simple dress of a shepherd, stands by her side. The People surround, and press upon her with loud cries of iou.

The People [shouting] —

Hail! Sappho, hail!

Rhamnes [mingling with the people] —

Hail! Sappho, dearest, hail!

Sappho —

Thanks! friends; my countrymen, my thanks!

Now first

This crown is dear. The laurel wreath adorns
The citizen's, but presses hard the poet's
Temples. *Here* first 'tis *mine*; here is its home;
Here, where awoke the dreaming youth of song,
Where first the muse breathed on my lyre, and joy
Inspired, entranced, and filled my raptured soul —
Here, where the cypresses around, whisper
Their spirits' greeting to the child, from out
The parents' grave — here, where their early glance
Dwelt first with looks of love upon the strivings
Of the muse, and blest its faintest efforts.
My countrymen! my *deeds* have crowned your care,
And in your circle, in the midst of love,
This crown is earned! Here first the wreath
Of glory is no crime!

One of the People —

Happy are we!

We call your glory ours! We feel and prize
From you each faithful, truthful word!

More than assembled Greece, we prize your fame!

Rhamnes [the old steward presses through the crowd] —

Sappho beloved! welcome, my queen! my Sappho!

*Sappho [descends from the car and welcomes with warmth all those
who are near] —*

My faithful Rhamnes, welcome! Antander,
Thou also here, spite of thy age's weakness?
Calista, Rhodope! dearest, you weep!
The eye pays richly, like the heart. Your tears!
Behold! they draw forth mine! O be they spared!

One of the People —

Thrice welcome, Sappho, to thy ancient home!

Thrice welcome to the circle of thy friends!

Sappho —

Ah, not in vain you greet your citizens!

She brings you one who merits *all*! Phaon
May boldly stand among the most renowned.
Although his years are few, and yet adorned
With graceful youth he stands, his words and deeds
Have long been ranked with boldest manhood!

Your contests — should they need the hero's sword,
 The lip of eloquence, the poet's fire,
 The friend's wise counsel, the protector's arm —
 Then call for him, and seek no further aid.

Phaon [embarrassed] —

Thou sportest, Sappho! a youth, obscure,
 Unknown, unsought, can I deserve so rich
 Reward? Who will believe thy praise?

Sappho —

Beholds thy blushes, Phaon, my praises
 Will be truth to them!

Whoe'er

Phaon —

I'm silent and amazed!

O'erwhelmed with shame,

Sappho —

Howe'er thy heart disowns, silence and worth
 Are sister virtues ever.

Assure thyself —

[*To her Countrymen*] —

Hear me, my friends!

Phaon's rich gifts, with gentle winning power,
 Were formed to charm my soul, and from the misty
 Pinnacles of fame to draw my wishes down,
 Down to the blooming vale of life! Phaon!
 I love him! he is my choice! at his side,
 Willingly I change the laurel for the
 Myrtle crown, and lead with you a simple life —
 A shepherd's life; asking the meed alone
 Of still domestic joys, to wake my lyre,
 That hitherto with love and glory rang.
 From it, my friends, you now shall learn to love!
 Alone, to love!

The People —

The gods reward thee, Sappho!

Hail! Sappho, hail!

Sappho —

It is enough, my friends!

Have Sappho's thanks! Follow my servants;
 Refreshed with food and wine, the joyous dance
 Shall fill the measure of our jubilee,
 And celebrate the union of our friends.

[*To the Country People, who greet her as they go out*] —

Farewell! and thou! and thou! to all, farewell!

[SAPPHO and PHAON alone.]

Behold my friends! thus lives thy Sappho; thus,
 For deeds of love, for friendship, gratitude — thus
 Ever has been the measure of my life.

I was at peace, and now am deeply blest.

Bereavement and ill fortune I have felt!
 Early the tomb closed o'er my parents' dust.
 My brethren's faithful heart, their adverse fate
 And self-inflicted wounds, to Acheron
 Impelled too early.

Too soon I learned
 The burning pain ingratitude inflicts
 Upon the trusting heart; the bitter wound
 Of falsehood; friendship's and love's illusions;
 The broken arrow — these have I known; but *one*,
 My Phaon, could I not survive! Of thee —
 Thy love and friendship robbed, Sappho must die;
 Therefore, beloved, thyself examine;
 Prove thy own heart. Thou canst not know the love,
 The depth, the infinite of love, that fills
This heart. O leave me never! Let me not learn
 This full and beating heart that leans on thine
 Can find it empty.

Phaon — Exalted woman!

Sappho —

Not so! Whispers thy heart no softer name?

Phaon —

Of what I speak, or how, I scarcely know.
 From out my lowly life a beam of light
 Has raised, and on the dazzling summit placed,
 Where my vain wishes fruitless led. This joy,
 Almost unhop'd, in rapture I am lost.
 The woods, the shores, fly swiftly from me!
 The mountain heights, the lowly cabins, vanish!
 Scarcely I feel that the firm ground is here!
 That I alone am borne on fortune's car.

Sappho —

Sweetly thou flatterest, love! yet thou flatterest!

Phaon —

And Sappho art thou! Apollo's darling!
 That from the farthest strand of Pelops' Isle,
 To where the full-lifed Hellas knits itself
 With the rough Thracian hills; in every isle
 That Chronos' hand flung in the Grecian sea;
 In Asia's rich transparent skies; in every clime
 Where Grecian lips the language singing speaks —
 The language of the gods! there Sappho's fame
 Rises in anthems to the listening stars!
 Sappho! how fell thine eye upon a youth,
 Lowly, obscure, unknown to fame? Himself

Revering the glory only of the lyre,
Because thy hand had touched it.

Sappho —

Not so —

Apollo's lyre! The ill-stringed lyre!
Repeats it then alone its *mistress'* praise?

Phaon —

Ah, since that hour, this trembling hand essayed
Itself, to touch the consecrated strings,
Thy image, goddess-like, arose before me!
When in the quiet circle of my brethren,
(And in their midst the shepherd fathers sat;)
Théone, my good sister, from her store
Sought out a song of thine; the sacred roll
Containing Sappho's songs; hushed were the tongues
Of the loud youths; the maidens prest together,
No kernel of the golden words to lose.
She read the songs of godlike youths aloud;
Of Aphrodite, the love-inspired! the dirge
Of lonely, wakeful nights; of Andromeda's,
And of Athe's sports. Suspended every breath,
And the high bosom swelled with joy, and all
Disturbing sounds were in deep silence hushed.
Then laid the silent Théone the roll
Aside; musing she sat, resting her head
And looking pale, in the uncertain darkness
Of our hut. "How may the *goddess* look," she said;
"Methinks, I see her now! By all the gods!
Among a thousand, I should know her well!"
Then were all tongues unloosed, and each upon
Imagination drawing, gave thee new charms!
Minerva's eye, and Juno's form, and Venus'
Charmed girdle!

I only, I stood silent
And went out. There, in the sacred stillness
Of solitary night, where nature's pulses
Through their enchanted circles slumbered,
I spread my arms to thee! There in the midst
Of the blue vault, the zephyr's breath, the moon's
Pale silver light, the mountain perfumes, blent
In one pervading sense of rapture, then,
Sappho, wert thou mine; I felt thee near me;
Thy image floated in the perfumed air —

Sappho —

Forbear! with thine own riches thou array'st me!
Never! alas! resume the borrowed charms!

Phaon —

Sent by my sire to high Olympus' games,
The chariot and the race's contest,
On the whole way 'twas borne along that thou —
That Sappho's lyre the poet's crown would win.
Impatient longings seized upon my heart;
The way half won, my courser sank o'erspent.
Still I prest on —

The chariot's flying course,
The wrestler's art, the discus' joyful shout
Touched not my thirsting sense. I asked not
Who had reached the highest place? the prize,
By whom 'twas won? "I shall see her," I said,
"Sappho! the woman crowned!" Now came the day,
The contests of the muse! Alcæus sang
In vain for me — Anacreon also!
The band that held my senses closed, for them
To unbind 'twas vain.
Then came the murmurs of the people loud,
Listen! The multitude divide. Behold,
Amid the waving crowds, appeared a goddess,
Bearing a golden lyre upon her hand.
Her tunic of pure white, flowing below,
Concealed her ankles. Of palm and laurel wrought,
The embroidered leaves were twined, showing
The poet's meed and his reward. Unbound,
The purple mantle floated the lovely form
Around, like the resplendent clouds of morn,
Veiling the sun.
Above her hair, dark as the raven's wing,
Rested the diadem, like the pale moon
Upon the brow of night, a silver crest.
A voice spake in my throbbing heart, "'Tis thou!"
Before I gave it sound, the jubilee
Deep, thousand-voiced, the people's jubilee,
Proclaimed thy name!

Sappho! How thou sang'st,
Surpassing all beside, and Sappho's lyre,
The hand that held it consecrating! alas!
I cannot tell. The timid unknown youth,
Struck by thy glance, rushed through the multitudes,
And at thy side stood shame-o'erwhelmed.

Sappho!

How much was real, how much I only dreamed,
Thou! only thou, canst tell.

Sappho —

Ah, well I know!
Thou stood'st, the whole of life burning within
Thy eyes, that, scarcely raised, revealed beneath
The enkindled flame. Thee I called; and
Thou, o'erwhelmed with joy and timid doubt,
Followed, uncertain, trusting in thy fate.

Phaon —

Ah! who would trust, who could believe that *Hellas'*
Noblest muse, on *Hellas'* lowliest son would look?

Sappho —

Forbear! To fate and to thyself unjust,
Despise not thou the gifts th' impartial gods
At every birth shower on the child —
On cheek and brow, filling the soul with joy.
Beauty's a precious gift; courage and power
Are gifts divine, securing this life's good;
The sister fair of poesy, imagination,
Thus adorns of life the roughest paths, its
Highest aim is to live happy here! Ah,
Not in vain the Muse herself has sought
The bare, unfruitful laurel; perfumeless,
It presses on the brow; the heart repaying
But in vain, the sacrifice it asks from her,
Who, standing on the heights of fame, spreads out
Her arms, to ask from life its overflow of love.

Phaon —

Lovely enchantress! Whate'er thou say'st bears
From thy lips the pledge of truth.

Sappho —

My friend!

Let us both crowns about our brows entwine.
From art's intoxicating cup but sparely sip,
And drink from life the sweetest draught of love.
Behold these shores, environed half with land,
And half embraced by ocean's stormy arms;
A simple charm reigns o'er the place. Within
These shades of roses, and these pillared halls,
Beneath these grottoes — here will we dwell,
And, like the immortals, live. Whate'er is mine
Is also thine! The highest joy, that thou
Wilt first possess the good. Look upon all —
'Tis thine! Thou standest in thy own estate!
My servants will regard thee as their Lord,
Their service will they learn from me. Maidens
And slaves! come near!

EUCHARIS, MELITTA, and RHAMNES enter, with other Servants and Slaves.

Rhamnes — Called you, my mistress?

Sappho —

Yes, draw near. Here you behold your master.

Rhamnes [*much wounded, and half aloud*] — Master!

Sappho [*with imperious gesture and feeling, then more gently*] —

Who spoke? What wouldst thou say, my friend?

Rhamnes [*retreating*] — Nothing!

Sappho — Say nothing then! you see your lord!

Whatever his desires may be, obedience

Demand, not less than mine. Alas for him

Whose disobedience on this brow traces

A cloud! Faults to myself I may forgive,

Never offense to him.

[*To PHAON*] —

Trust thyself to them,

Phaon; heavy upon thee lies the weight

Of this day's journey; of hospitality

Enjoy the sacred right, Sappho's first gift.

Phaon —

O, could I from me throw my lowly life,

As I my soiled dress exchange for new!

Freedom of thought with recollection win,

And be what I desire. Farewell!

Sappho —

I wait thee here.

Farewell! Remain, Melitta!

[*PHAON goes out.*]

SAPPHO. MELITTA.

Sappho [*after remaining silent a long time*] — Now, my Melitta!

Melitta —

What, O my mistress! what is your wish?

Sappho —

Rushes the blood alone in my warm breast,

And ice in every other frozen heart?

She saw him, heard his voice; the air that fanned

His brow was breathed by her — and the first sound

She utters is, "Your pleasure, mistress." Go!

Almost could I despise thee, my Melitta!

[*MELITTA goes out silently. SAPPHO throws herself upon the green bank, after a while calling MELITTA back.*]

Know'st thou thy friend so little, my Melitta?

Couldst thou of gratulation nothing say?

You saw him! heard him! Saw you then nothing
Worthy of remark? Maiden! where were thy eyes?

Melitta —

Thou knowest full well what thou hast said, that in
The stranger's presence the maiden should be modest;
Her glances should restrain.

Sappho [*kissing her*] —

And thou,

Poor, lonely child, cast down thy eyes. For thee
The lesson was not meant, but for thy elders.

[*Looks penetratingly at her*] —

Yet stay — once more — since I have left thy side,
How hast thou altered!

No longer as a child,

But as a maiden fair, I see thee. Ah!

Dear child, thou art right. The lesson reaches thee!

[*Rises to go, but turns to MELITTA*] —

Wherefore so silent and so timid now?

Thou wert not so before. Why dost thou tremble?

Sappho, the friend, not now the mistress, speaks;

The pride, the scorn, the sense of power,

And all that in thy friend was wrong, is past;

Not with her have returned her faults; sunk,

As she passed the bosom of the flood, below

Its stormy surface. The breath of love, that,

Like the golden beam of evening, turns

The thunder-cloud to gold, within my heart,

Has all it touched, ennobled. O, pardon

The rash reproof, the bitter word, that killed

Like the sword's point. Like sisters will we live,

Divided only by my love to Phaon —

In all things else, alike. I will be good —

Pious and good.

Melitta —

That wert thou always.

Sappho —

What they call good — alas! not bad! but ah!

Too ill and poor my life, for such a high

Reward! Believest thou, Melitta, he will

Be happy?

Melitta —

Who then's not happy with thy love?

Sappho —

What can I offer from my dearth? Phaon!

There in the fullness of his youth he stands,

With all life's fairest blossoms on his head.

Expands he but his wings, and like the bird

Of Jove, he's lifted to the sun. All

That is beautiful, and great, and high, is his.
The world's subdued by power.

And I!

O give me back, ye gods! my vanished youth!
Extinguish in this breast the stamp of years,
And all of sorrow's deeply woven trace.
The memory of all I've done and felt,
And suffered here — O, let it be as though
It ne'er had been! Let time return to that
Sweet age, the round and blooming cheek of youth,
When, undefined, the sense of a new world
Opened around me. Anticipation then,
And not the memory of pain, played
Tremblingly within the lyre, and moved
Its golden strings. Ah, then an unknown land,
Enchanting, strange, the magic land of hope,
Allured my steps, and in my numbers sang.

[She reclines on the bosom of MELITTA, and is silent]

Melitta [alarmed] —

Sappho, thou art ill! Thou faintest, Sappho!

Sappho —

I stand upon the margin of a cliff,
Wide gaping between him and me, and see
The land beyond, waving with golden grain!
My eyes can reach it — my weary footsteps,
Never!

Alas for her, whom glory's empty
Shadow from the low circle of her home
Allures. Her fragile bark is shipped alone
Upon a wild and stormy sea of waves.
There spreads no tree; no leaf nor flower there blooms
Upon the gray, immeasured space. The coast
Looms cheerful on her sight. The voice she loves
In faintest echoes meets her ear! wearied
She turns and seeks her home. Traces of love
So lightly left are lost. Spring is no more!
And ah! no flower is there!

[She looks with melancholy at her crown]. The dry
And faded leaf alone!

Melitta —

The lovely crown!

The glorious wreath! sought by the God-inspired!
And by so many lost!

Sappho —

Lost? 'Tis true!

Melitta, thou speak'st truth; by thousands sought,
And won by few. Ah, let not her who craves

Reproach its power. It is no empty
 Sound. Its touch imparts the power of gods!
 I'm not so poor in gifts. His wealth, with wealth
 Of mind, to meet the gifts of beauty and
 Of youth, I'll hold in this fair wreath. Herein
 Shall blend the future and the past.

You gaze,
 Melitta, and understand me not. Seek not
 To learn, nor understand!

Melitta —

Art thou then vexed?

Sappho —

Not with thee! with thee not, dearest child! Go,
 And say, I'll meet them here.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A small open plain near the grotto, surrounded with rose trees. PHAON
comes in alone.

Phaon —

Here, quiet dwells. The guest's wild joy is still;
 The cymbals' noise, the flutes so wildly gay,
 The sound of unchecked mirth, reaches not here.
 These trees so softly whispering to the heart,
 Invite its fevered pulses to repose.
 How has my being changed! the tenor
 Of my life how altered; since that fair morn
 I left my parents' home, borne swiftly on
 By winged courser to Olympian heights!
 In cheerful thoughts, e'en then, could I unfold
 The tangled thread of sensitive desire,
 And clear as light it lay before me. Now,
 Like a sultry summer's night, emotions,
 Sweet and painful, mingling in misty doubt,
 Lie like a cloud upon me. A heavy veil
 Covers the past. The thoughts of yesterday
 I scarcely can recall — the present
 From the past divide. "Were it myself," I ask,
 "That by her side, at fair Olympus stood,
 Shared in her triumph? as an equal shared?
 My name in chorus did the people shout?
 Mingling with hers." Ah, was it thus? Scarcely
 Can I believe. Ah, what a wretch is man,

That which, as hope inspired, fulfilled, lulls him
To sleep.

When fancy's slight-sketch'd image
Painted her form upon the floating mist,
Incited by a passing word, a glance
Of love, how easy had it been of life
The precious gift to cast away! And now —
Now, she is mine, and only mine! Now that
My wishes like the winter chrysalis
Expand, and all the golden butterflies
About me play, I question, pause, and tremble
To advance! Ah, I forget myself, my home,
My parents — all! my parents? must I now first
Remember you? alas! could I so long
Forget? No word, no sign — perhaps my death
You weep! perhaps the hundred tongues of fame
Already tell that he, your son, Phaon,
To you so dear — him to Olympus sent,
The prize to win. In Sappho's arms —

To scorn her,

Who shall dare? The ornament of women!
Who dare at her the poisoned arrow aim?
For her, against the world I'll stand. For her,
My father's anger I can brave. Saw he
Her now — the ancient pious disesteem
He felt at female poets, he'd lay aside.
Even him her lute would charm —

[PHAON *remains sunk in thought, and hears approaching
footsteps*] —

Who comes? The noise
Draws near! How retreat? where hide?

Ah, here!

[*He goes into the grotto.*]

SCENE II.

EUCCHARIS, MELITTA, and Female Slaves, *with flowers and wreaths.*

Eucharis —

Haste, maidens, haste! Gather more flowers!
Bring heaps of flowers. Adorn the porticoes,
The hall, the court, the vestibule and doors!
E'en the parterre wreath high with flowers.
To leaf and bud add the imperial rose,
To celebrate the feast of love, Sappho
Prepares for Phaon!

Maidens [displaying their flowers] —

Behold! behold!

[*They begin to hang the pillars of the porticoes, and the trees around, with wreaths of roses and chains of flowers.*]

Eucharis —

Ah, well! right well! And thou, Melitta!

Where, maiden, thy flowers!

Melitta [showing her empty hands] — Ah, where?

Eucharis —

Melitta! thine! thou comest with empty hands.

Melitta —

Spare me! I'll fetch them.

Eucharis —

She moves not — dreamer!

And yet will bring them! Thou little muser,

What has come o'er thee? At the feast, to-day,

Sappho, so often smiling, looked at thee,

And then cast down her eyes. Blushing, confused,

You trembled, and forgot the fair routine.

And when the wine cup to present she called,

And ere it touched the stranger's lip, to thine

Was pressed; then cried she out, "The eyes cast down."

Melitta trembled, and half the contents

Of the wreathed cup were on the marble poured,

Then, even Sappho smiled. The cause, ah, tell us.

Lies will not help.

Melitta —

Spare me!

Eucharis —

A little tear

Comes there to help. Poor thing! I'll say no more.

Yet do not weep. I cannot chide, so often

Are you good, Melitta! Your flowers are those!

Come, I'll bring more. Stay here, and help to weave

The roses and their buds. But listen, child! weep not!

[*EUCCHARIS and the Maidens go out.*]

SCENE III.

MELITTA alone. She sits upon the turf seat, and begins to form a wreath. After a few moments, she lays it by her side, and leans sorrowfully on her hand.

Melitta —

I can no more! Alas, my head will burst!

Wildly my heart struggles within my breast.

Here must I sit, deserted and alone

In a strange land, far from my parents' hearth.

These hands, in vain, bound with the slave-wove chain,
 I open to my own; implore in vain!
 Ah! no one listens, no one heeds my tears!
 Children and friends I see prest heart to heart;
 For me none beats. The loved? they dwell far off!
 Children I see, climbing the father's knee,
 The pious brow and sacred locks to kiss.
 Mine dwells far from me, o'er the desert sea!
 Where no caress from his loved child can greet
 Him more. They use me well, and fail not
 Gentle words — alas, not love — pity alone
 Vouchsafes the slave kind words. The flatt'ring lips
 Too soon are filled with scorn and bitter jests.

[*She kneels.*]

Ye gods! who oft have heard, when piously
 I've turned beseechingly to you, and with
 Rich hand have crowned my wishes. Listen
 Once more, and turn a gracious ear! conduct
 Me to my own! Let this hot brow, stricken
 With grief, rest once again upon the tender
 Breast of love. Ah! lead me to my own, or
 Take me — take me to yourselves!

SCENE IV.

PHAON, *who, while MELITTA was thus complaining, stood at the entrance of the grotto, comes forward and lays his hand gently upon her shoulder.*

Phaon —

So young, and yet so sad? Maiden, so sad!

Melitta [much frightened, draws herself together] — Ah!

Phaon —

For a friend's breast, I heard thee ask the gods.
 A friend is here! Sorrow unites as well as love;
 The wide world o'er are brethren those that mourn.
 I also weep my parents. Homesickness
 Of the heart impels me to them. Our griefs
 Let us confide, that each may be a balsam
 For the other. Thou art silent. Wherefore?
 Why art thou trustless? Look at me, my child!
 Not ill are my intentions.

[*He raises her head upon his hand.*]

Ah! I see —

Thou art indeed the little Hebe, the floor,

The polished floor, refreshing, not the guest.
 But why so timid? the accident,
 So innocent, the guest had charmed — the mistress also.

[*At the last word, MELITTA blushes deeply, raises her eyes and looks at PHAON, and then rises to go.*

Offend thee would I not, my lovely child!
 Thy gentle eye, so earnest and so sad,
 I marked it at the feast. (Do not mistake.)
 Throughout the noisy joy, it, virgin pure,
 Shone with a quiet, patient, tender light.
 Who art thou? and what keeps thee here? serving
 I saw thee. The domestic slaves
 Called thee companion!

Melitta [*turns away and would go*] — That I am — I am —
Phaon [*holding her back*] —

Not yet!

Melitta — What wouldst thou of the slave, my lord?

Let a slave seek her!

[*Tears stifling her voice*] — And ye gods! me to yourselves!

Phaon [*caressingly*] —

Compose thyself! thou tremblest! thou art moved!
 The slavish chain binds but the hands! the soul
 Of servant and of lord are free and equal.
 Be calm! Sappho is good and mild. A word
 From me, and without ransom, thou art free!
 Restored to friends and home — thy father's joy!

[*Melitta sorrowfully shakes her head.*

Believe me, it is certain. But how soon
 Has that deep longing vanished — that homesickness
 For thy fatherland, that seized thee first!

Melitta —

Where is my fatherland? Ah, tell me that!

Phaon —

Knowest thou not?

Melitta —

In tender childhood's days,
 From its protecting shelter was I torn —
 Within my memory dwells its flowers, its fields,
 But not its name. Beneath the sun it lay;
 For there 'twas always light, and warm, and fair.

Phaon —

And lies it far from hence?

Melitta —

Far, very far!
 Foliage of other trees o'ershadowed me,
 And different flowers perfumed the air;

In the blue vault shone lovelier stars ; good,
Friendly men there dwelt, and fairer children.
Ah ! and a good old man, with silver locks,
Caressed me. I called him father. Another —
O, so beautiful and bold — with eyes and hair
So brown — indeed — like thine —

Phaon —

Thou'rt silent— He?

Melitta —

He also —

Phaon [*seizing her hand*]—Caressed thee? is it not so?

Melitta [softly] —

I was a child!

Phaon —

I know it well—a sweet,

Unconscious, lovely child. Now further on?

Melitta —

Thus all went fair and well with me. One night
A loud shriek pierced my ear. Frightened, I woke!
On every side, they called. Alone, my nurse,
My faithful nurse, bore me alone far out
In the wild night. The flames I saw devour
Our cabins; saw wild fighting men; around,
Our neighbors fleeing and falling! Now drew near
A tyrant, and stretched out his hand for me.
Amid wild shrieks, sorrow, and battle cries,
I found myself upon a vessel's deck,
That, arrow-swift, through the dark water glided.
Maidens and children round about me wept —
As we receded from our native land,
By one and one, the number always lessening.
Days and nights, even whole moons, we sailed;
At last I was alone. Of all, remained
I only, by the wild men stolen. We neared,
At length, the strand of Lesbos — touched the land,
And Sappho saw the child — she proffered gold.
Melitta is her slave.

Phaon —

In Sappho's hands

Is then thy lot so heavy?

Melitta —

No. Friendly

And kind she took me to her heart. My eyes
Forgot to weep, my little heart to sigh.
Sappho with love sheltered and cared for me.
For she is good, though often rash and bitter.
Sappho is violent, though kind and good.

Phaon —

And yet thy home thou canst not yet forget.

Melitta —

Ah, all too soon the memory goes. The dance,
The childish play, and household cares efface
The early image of my childhood's home.
When grief and sorrow press, comes the sharp pain,
And memory, with trembling hand, withdraws
The shadowy veil from the long past. And thus
To-day my heart was heavy, and every
Lightly spoken word pierced like an arrow.
But now, I'm well and happy.

[*The maidens call "MELITTA."*
Hark! they call!

Phaon —

Melitta —

I go — they call. [*Gathers up her flowers and wreath.*

Phaon [*taking the flowers*] —

What hast thou here?

Melitta —

Roses.

Phaon —

For whom are they?

Melitta —

For thee! for thee and Sappho.

Phaon —

Remain!

Melitta — They call! farewell!

Phaon —

Thus shalt thou not —

In sorrow thus depart. Show me thy flowers.

[*Selects a rose and places it in her bosom*] —

This rose shall be the witness of this hour.

Remember, not alone in thy own home,

But in the stranger's land, are friends!

[*MELITTA, agitated by his emotion, stands with her arms hanging motionless, her head sunk, and eyes fixed on PHAON, who has removed some steps, and is looking intently at her. They call from within, "MELITTA."*

Melitta [*to PHAON*] —

Me didst thou call?

Phaon —

I called not. 'Twas within.

Melitta [*gathering up her flowers*] —

I come.

Phaon — So avaricious art thou, then?

Deserve I not a gift, one, in return?

Melitta —

A gift! what then have I to give?

Phaon —

The vain,

The proud give gold. Friendship and love bestow

Their all. A flower — *here* thou hast flowers.

Melitta [*throwing him her flowers*] —

How, *these?* that every wild girl plucks! for thee!

No, never!

Phaon — What else?

Melitta — • So plundered are the stems,

There is no trace of flowers.

[*She tries to reach the high branches*] —

There hangs, indeed,

A rose on that high twig — but all too high —

I cannot reach it.

Phaon — I'll raise thee to it.

Melitta —

Ah, not so.

Phaon — Why not? I'll not resign my will!

Melitta [*steps upon the bank to reach the rose, hanging too high*] —

Now come — the twig I'll bend to thee.

Phaon —

That's right.

Melitta [*standing on tiptoe, bends down the twig, upon which hangs a splendid rose*] —

Canst reach it?

Phaon [*without regarding the rose, looks at MELITTA*] —

Not yet.

Melitta —

Alas! I slip — I fall —

[*The branch springs upward, and MELITTA, frightened, sinks into*

PHAON'S arms.

Phaon —

No; I'll support thee!

Melitta —

Ah, leave me! go!

Phaon [*holding her*] —

Melitta!

Melitta — Ah, leave me! go!

Phaon [*pressing a kiss upon her lips*] —

Melitta!

SAPPHO, simply dressed, and without crown or lyre, enters.

Sappho —

My friend, I seek thee! Ha! what do I see?

Melitta —

Listen! the mistress!

Phaon —

How, Sappho! Thou art here!

[*He releases MELITTA from his arms; a silence*

Sappho —

Melitta!

Melitta — Madam!

Sappho — What seek'st thou here?

Melitta —

Flowers !

Sappho — And not without good fortune —

Melitta —

Ah ! the roses !

Sappho — They blush upon thy lips !

Melitta —

They hang too high —

Sappho — Perhaps not high enough !

Go !

Melitta — Madam ! shall I — go ?

Sappho — Go ! *only* go !

[*MELITTA goes.*

[*After a long pause*] —

Phaon !

Phaon — *Sappho* !

Sappho — Phaon ! you went too soon.

Your absence marred our festival of joy.

Phaon —

The wine-cup love I not — nor yet loud joy.

Sappho —

Not loud — that were indeed reproach !

Phaon —

How so ?

Sappho —

If it displeased thee thus — the festival

Of my return — I've erred indeed !

Phaon —

Thus

Sappho to wound, was far from my intent.

Sappho —

In its wild joy the heart demands the sound

Of jubilee ; while blest within itself

It dwells, all undisturbed, and seeks alone

The solitude of joy.

Phaon —

Just so !

Sappho —

To our

Good friends, my gratitude for all their love

Was due. Wine, as thou know'st, imparts to them

Its joy. No feast in future shall disturb

Our peace : I love them less than thou !

Phaon —

Sappho !

I thank thee !

[*He appears as though going.*

Sappho — Thou wouldst go ?

Phaon —

That I remain,

Wouldst thou ?

Sappho —

To go or to remain, thou'rt free !

Phaon —

Sappho! thou'rt angry.

Sappho [*much moved*] — *Phaon*!

Phaon —

Sappho!

Wouldst thou — ?

Sappho —

Nothing! yet something — I would say.

[*She appears calm.*]

I saw thee, with Melitta — sporting.

Phaon —

Melitta! who? Ah, yes! go on! Melitta —

Sappho —

She is a lovely child.

Phaon —

O yes! go on!

Sappho —

The dearest, might I call her, of my slaves.

Yes, of my children — for as a child

I love her. That yet the chain of slavery

Is unloosed, her orphanhood forbids. Nature

Denies to her the love of home and kindred;

Not yet her feeble youth can stand alone,

Unsheltered by maternal love and care.

In Mytilene's best ranks (this is my charge)

My maidens dwell, and all their happiness

Ascribe to Sappho's care.

Phaon [*musings*] —

Most beautiful!

Sappho —

Of all the maidens a capricious fate

Has led to Sappho, none are more cherished

Than my Melitta, the little maiden

With the quiet mien. With moderate gifts

And uninspired for highest art, she yet

Is dearer than the rest. Most innocent

And unassuming, her deep and heart-felt love,

That, wounded, like the garden chrysalis,

Draws back, and trembles at the slightest touch;

Yet, where it fastens, dies!

Phaon —

Beautiful! go on!

Most beautiful!

Sappho —

I would not, — pardon,

My friend, — I would not that a passing joke,

An unreflective word, wishes or hopes

In this pure breast awake, that, unfulfilled,

Martyr the soul. This gentle heart I'd spare

That longing which consumes its life — and that

Rejected love that like the worm preys — my friend!

Phaon —

What saidst thou, Sappho?

Sappho —

You do not listen.

Phaon —

Yes — I hear — the love that torments —

Sappho —

It does

Indeed — but now you are not well — again

The subject we'll resume.

Phaon —

Ah, yes — another time.

Sappho —

For this, farewell! This was the hour in Sappho's

Early days, sacred to meditation; now

I do not hope to find the muse in that

Still grotto. But yet, the hour is calm, and

Quiet soothes the soul. Meantime, farewell!

Phaon —

Thou also — wouldst thou leave me?

Sappho —

Wouldst thou

I stay?

Phaon — Farewell!

[*SAPPHO turns quickly from him, and goes into the grotto.*
[*PHAON, after a long pause, and looking immovably on the ground*]—

And art thou really —

[*Looking around*]—

Indeed! she's gone. I am confused — my head

Is hot and heavy. Ah, here she sat —

[*He throws himself on the bank*]—

That lovely, blooming child! here will I rest,

Here shall my weary heart find peace.

[*He reclines with his head on the turf bank.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Same as the former. *PHAON lies slumbering upon the turf.* *SAPPHO enters from the grotto.*

Sappho —

It is in vain! my thoughts rove far from home,

But come, unlike the bee, all empty back.

Whate'er I do, whate'er I only think,

Ever before me dwells that hateful scene.

Ah, should I flee beyond the limits of this earth,

Where on my eye more lovely colors rise,

Still is it there! his arms around her thrown,
 His lips upon hers prest! I will not think!
 Am I not frantic, mad? thus to torment
 My soul, and to bewail what may not be!
 Who knows? some fleeting mood, passing emotions,
 Some evanescent wish, that fled as soon
 As formed, lured him an instant to her arms.
 Alas! the measure of his love cannot
 Be found in this unfathomed breast! In man's
 Unstable mind, changing with change, subjected
 To its laws!

With joyful step, he enters free
 The open path of life, all flooded with
 The morning glow of hope. With shield and sword,
 Courage and faith, prepared to strive and win
 Of bright success the crown. For his wild wish
 And restless hope, the quiet inner life
 Of love is all too narrow. Love, indeed,
 An humble flower, blooms at his feet. He bends
 To pluck the lovely thing — places all cold
 And bears aloft the trophy in his helm.
 He never knows the deep and sacred flame
 That dwells in woman's breast. Her all of life —
 Her wishes and her hopes center and dwell
 There only, like the young bird fluttering
 Around the mother's nest — its cradle and
 Its grave! Her whole of life, a diamond rare
 She hangs upon the fate of her all newly
 Risen love!

He loves! in his wide breast is room
 Enough for many loves. What women deem
 A grievous fault, with levity he acts;
 And if he meet a kiss from other lips,
 Deems it his right to take. Ah, it is so!
 Alas —

[*She turns and perceives PHAON sleeping*]—

But see! there in the rose tree's shade,
 He sleeps — the too dear traitor — there he sleeps,
 And rest and quiet, soothing cheerfulness,
 Have settled tenderly upon his brow.
 Thus breathes in gentle slumber — innocence;
 Thus rises gently the unsullied breast.
 Dearest! thy slumber I'll believe, whate'er
 Thy waking moments may disclose. Pardon,
 Beloved! if the first moment of surprise

Thy honor wounded ; if I could suspect
 Falsehood its foul admission e'er could find
 In that pure temple. He smiles, his lips are
 Parted — a name seems hovering there. Awake !
 And call thy Sappho, who stands near !

[*She presses a kiss upon his brow.*

Phaon [*awakes, opens his arms, and, with eyes half closed, calls out*] — Melitta!

Sappho [*steps back, surprised and shocked*] —
 Ha !

Phaon — Ah, who has waked me ? who, envious,
 Has scared away the image of my dream ?
Sappho ! thou here ? I knew it well — thy form,
 The prototype, stood at my side ; and thus
 The dreaming image was so beautiful !
 Thou art distressed ! what has disturbed thee ? say.
 Ah, I am free and joyous. The burthen
 That o'erweighed this anxious breast is gone ;
 Most wondrously it sank away ; I breathe
 Again, free and unfettered. The cheerful,
 Golden sunlight, the caressing air, the sound
 Of happy voices, that only fluttered
 O'er my senses, are now most welcome.
 I feel inspired with joy — most happy — blest —
 And only wish more senses — to enjoy —

Sappho [*lost in thought, speaks low to herself*] —
 Melitta !

Phaon — Dearest ! be happy ! cheerful
 And happy. 'Tis here so beautiful ! ah,
 So heavenly fair ! With weary pinion
 Sinks the summer eve, so tenderly, so soft,
 Upon the quiet sea. The sea, love-thirsting,
 Gently swells to meet the bridal of the
 God of day. A low breath whispers tremblingly
 Within the slender pine, that bends caressing
 To the virgin rose, soft greeting her with love.
Sappho ! we love !

Sappho — This injured breast again
 He'd fill ! Too deeply I have read his heart !

Phaon —
 The feverish joy, that many weary days
 Consumed my life, has fled — I now am calm ;
 Believe me, *Sappho* ! so truly good as now
 I've rarely been. Let us be gay — cheerful
 And calmly gay. But say, of dreams what think'st thou ?

Sappho —

Dreams lie ! and liars are my hatred.

Phaon —

Listen ! I had e'en now, as here I slept,
A dream both wonderful and strange. I was
Exactly as before on high Olympus ;
I saw thee in the contest, as before,
Secure the highest prize. In the loud cry,
The noise and rush of chariots and men,
A silver sound was heard, and all was hushed.
Thou sang of love's pure joys, and I — I
To my inmost heart was moved. I fell
Before thee ! and thou, thou canst remember !
Again ; a change came o'er my dream. Thee
I perceived no longer — yet there — there stood
The lovely form. Around the shoulders flowed
The purple robe ; the lyre was in her hand ;
The face alone was changed, as 'twere a mist,
Like that that floats upon the mountain top.
The laurel crown had vanished — vanished
With that deep sadness on thy brow. The lips,
So tuneful with the songs of gods, now smiled
A lovely, joy-inspiring smile. Thy face,
Stolen from Minerva, changed of itself —
A child's was there — in short, it was thyself,
And not thyself — Sappho sometimes, and then —
Again —

Sappho [*almost shrieking*] — Melitta !

Phaon [*much alarmed*] —

Who told thee that — that

It was her ! myself — I scarcely knew it !

But thou art moved — and I —

[*SAPPHO motions with her hand for him to leave her.*

How ! shall I go ?

[*SAPPHO again signs him to leave her.*

Thou wilt not hear me, Sappho ! Shall I go ?

[*SAPPHO makes no answer. He goes.*

SCENE II.

Sappho [*alone, after a long pause*] —

The quiver sounded !

[*Pressing both hands on her breast*] — Here is the arrow !

Who can doubt longer ? Oh ! 'tis clear, 'tis clear.

She dwells within his oath-forgetting heart ;

She hovers o'er his shame-forgetting brow.
 In sleep his dreams put on her form. He dreams
 The false one near — and Sappho for her slave
 Is scorned. Sappho! by Heaven! for whom?
 Am I no longer Sappho? no longer her
 Who at her feet saw kneeling heroes, kings —
 And playing with her proffered crowns, proudly
 She looked at them, and heard, and left them all
 Am I the same that, with loud jubilee,
 Was greeted as its jewel, by assembled Greece?
 Why did I rush from that high place, gained
 By the laurel, down to the narrow vale,
 Where poverty and crime and treachery dwell?
 My place was there on high — there on the clouds;
 Here is no place for me! none but the grave!
 When gods descend to earth, they mingle not
 With men. The immortal and the human
 In the same cup never unite. One, one
 Only must thou choose; and hast thou chosen?
 There's no return for thee! The golden fruit
 Of fame, once tasted, like the fatal seed
 Of death, from life forever draws thee —
 From the quiet shades where humble pleasures
 Dwell. No, never more may life, however dear,
 Allure thee there, with flattering sounds of joy.
 Friendship nor love no more can bless! forbear!
 Unfortunate, forbear! Roses, wouldst thou pluck?
 The thorn, e'en now, is in thy breast!

I'll see, .

I'll look upon these charms, victorious
 O'er Sappho's wealth of mind. Do I then dream?
 For when I ask, a timid child, unformed,
 With downcast eyes seeking the ground; with lips,
 Whose only sounds are childish lisps! Thus
 She comes before me; the love of play, the
 Fear alone of anger, moving her soul.
 How! did my eyes alone o'erlook the charms
 That move his inmost being? Melitta!
 Yes, her I will see. Melitta, come!

SCENE III.

Enter EUCHARIS.

Eucharis —

Did Sappho call?

Sappho — I called Melitta;
The child, where is she?

Eucharis — Where? Within her room.

Sappho —
She seeks then solitude! What does she there?

Eucharis —
I know not. Strange is her being, wayward
And strange through the whole day. This morning
Was she quiet, but still in tears. This eve,
Laden with napkins, to the limpid brook,
That through the myrtle grove impetuous
Rushes, she hastened on. Anxious to learn
What there she sought, I followed after.
I found her there.

Sappho — With him?

Eucharis [*much surprised*] — With whom?

Sappho — Go on!

Eucharis —
In the clear brook I found her standing, bent,
Her tunic high tucked up (she feared no spy),
With little hands the water lading, and
Showering both arms and face. The sunbeams
Through the myrtle leaves, the glow of haste,
Had shed a lovely rose tint o'er her form.
A nymph of Dian, as she stood — ah, yes,
The youngest of her train she seemed.

Sappho — Not praise,
But knowledge did I seek.

Eucharis — When now the bath
And its long labors o'er, and breast and cheek
All dry, she hastened singing to the house,
In thought so deeply lost, that the green twigs
To frighten her I threw, she heeded not,
But closed her chamber; and what there she did
I know not. I heard her seeking her robes,
And singing cheerful songs between.

Sappho — She sings,
And Sappho — no, she does not weep. Bring her
To me.

Eucharis — Melitta?

Sappho — Yes; who else? Ah!

A sweet name! an ear-enchanting name!
Melitta! Sappho! Go! bring her to me.

SCENE IV.

SAPPHO alone. *She sits upon the turf seat, and rests her head upon her hand.*

Sappho —

No! 'tis in vain — alas! I call on pride —
Love answers in its stead.

[*She sinks back in reverie. MELITTA enters, simply but carefully dressed. A rose is on her bosom, and roses in her hair. She pauses at the entrance, but as SAPPHO does not move, she comes nearer.*

Melitta —

Sappho! I'm here!

[*SAPPHO turns quickly her head, and shuddering draws back.*

Sappho [*to herself*] — Ah! beautiful! Ah, gods,
She's beautiful!

[*She conceals her face with both hands. A pause.*

Melitta — Sappho! me didst thou call?

Sappho —

How carefully adorned! False as she is,
To meet the false one! How hard to check this
Inward anger, or to conceal my fears!

[*To MELITTA*] —

What feast to-day demands this festal dress?

Melitta —

A festival?

Sappho —

Why wear this dress and flowers?

Melitta —

Sappho! you've blamed me oft — the ornaments
So rarely worn, presented by your love.
But gala days, so niggardly they come;
I've spared them all — the jewels rare — but now
To-day I said, "So joyful 'tis to-day,
Myself more gayly I'll adorn."

Sappho —

A joyful day? Indeed I know not why!

Melitta —

Why? Because — ah — that thou art back returned —
That thou — indeed, I know not why I'm glad.

Sappho —

Ah, false, she's false!

Melitta —

Say'st thou?

Sappho [*controlling her emotion*] — Melitta, come —

We will speak frankly with each other now,
How old art thou?

Melitta — Alas, thou knowest, Sappho!
Of my infancy the melancholy tale.
No mother counted carefully the suns
That on my birthday shone. Yet I believe
I number sixteen years.

Sappho — No! thou liest!

Melitta—Sappho! I?

Sappho — Dost thou speak truth ?

Melitta — Sappho! I do!

Sappho —
To-day, you scarcely count your fifteenth year.

Melitta —
It may be so.

Sappho — So green in years, so ripe
In art — it cannot be ; not thus does nature
Counterfeit her work. No ! I'll believe it not.
Melitta — here — rememberest thou the day,
Now thirteen years, thou first saw'st *Sappho* ?
Wild men, sea pirates, brought thee to my door.
You wept ; deep sobs convulsed your little breast.
I pitied you, the orphan, homeless child ;
Your tears besought me, and I paid the price.
Myself almost a child, I pressed thee warm
Upon my heart. They would divide us, but,
Thy little arms linking about my neck,
Thou slept, consoled ! Rememberest thou that day ?

Melitta —
Ah, can its memory ever pass away ?

Sappho —
 Soon after this, the fever's serpent wiles,
 Breath-poisoning, upon thee seized. Melitta!
 Whose was the breast that through the weary night
 Pillowed thy head, all self-forgetting — death
 Robbing of its prey, tearing the loved one
 From his giant grasp?

Melitta — Sappho! it was thou!
What have I, then — what am I, that to thee
And to thy goodness, I owe not?

Sappho [*drawing her to her*].— Not so!
Here on my heart! Here is thy place. Ah, well
I know, thou wouldst not of thyself, not
With thy will, betray thy *Sappho*. Together,
Once again, our hearts shall beat together.
Our eyes, in sister eyes once more shall look;
The truthful words out of true hearts shall breathe;

Again; the same true heart, the faithful ear
 (The separate sounds having one echo),
 Scarcely can know from which true breast they part.

Melitta —

Sappho!

Sappho — Yes, I am right. Thee I may trust!

Is't true? Thou wouldst not, no! thou couldst not —

Melitta —

O Sappho! what?

Sappho — Thou knowest, Melitta! Go,

Lay off this vain and idle dress. Not thus
 I love to see thee. Put on a simple robe;
 These varied dyes offend the classic taste.
 Melitta should be simply clad. Simplicity
 Becomes her best, and modesty's her native garb.
 Go — another dress — I say — Remain!
 Hold, I say. Where wouldst thou go? Remain!
 Look in my eyes. Why are thy own cast down,
 Seeking the ground? Ah! not thus, not timid
 Wert thou when Phaon —

Ha! now thou art red!

Traitor! thou art thyself betrayed! Deny
 Thou canst not. Not the false tongue, the crimsoned
 Cheek's the witness of thy guilt; it burns and
 Pales, obedient to the traitor heart.
 Unfortunate! 'twas this, that at the feast
 So strangely moved, that I for timid
 Innocence mistook. A snare it proved, that
 Like the crafty spider's web inclosed its prey,
 So young, and yet so artful! so seeming fair,
 With poison in thy heart. Do words then fail?
 Wilt answer not?

Melitta —

I know not what thou mean'st.

Sappho —

Not? and tears? Tears are the sacred right of grief.
 Answer with words, although from truth divorced.
 Of innocence, the silent signs will not
 Avail, while bridelike and seductively
 Adorned. Take off the flowers. Scarcely
 They serve to hide the serpent folds beneath.
 Take off the wreath.

[*MELITTA* silently removes the wreath from her head.

Give me the crown! In memory of thy truth
 I'll keep the withered leaves. Faded, alas!
 Like Sappho's hope, Melitta's gratitude!

Why sparest thou the rose upon thy breast?

Lay it away. [MELITTA *steps back*.

Is it a love pledge? speak!

[MELITTA *crosses her arms upon her breast, concealing the rose*.

In vain you strive! The rose, I say.

Melitta — Never!

My life — rather my life!

Sappho [*drawing her dagger*] — Ungrateful slave!

Thy life is mine! Give me the rose.

Melitta [*falling on her knees*] — Ye gods!

Oh! then protect the orphan! ye high gods!

Phaon [*enters*] —

Who calls? Melitta, thou! a dagger drawn!

[*A pause*.

What's here! thou, Sappho, here!

Sappho — Ask of the rest.

Phaon —

Melitta! what?

Melitta — The fault alone is mine.

The slave's obedience I refused.

Sappho — Forbear!

Load not thy soul with false deserts. Heavy,
Too heavy, lie the true upon thee.

[*To herself*] — Alas!

Does Sappho need the falsehood of her slave?

[*Aloud to PHAON*] —

The rose I ordered from her breast removed;
And she to obey my will refused.

Phaon —

And she was right. By all the gods, she's right.

No right hast thou to rob her of the flower.

I gave it for remembrance, a token sweet

Of a too happy hour; of my esteem

A sign; a proof that not in every breast

Compassion is extinguished, misfortune

Is forgot; a drop of honey in the cup

By stranger's pride prest to her lips; a pledge

Of my deep, inward faith, that innocence

Is woman's fairest crown — more prized

The humble wreath of love than glory's

Laurel crown. She weeps — weep not, Melitta!

[*To SAPPHO*] —

When slavery was bought, the price of tears

Thou didst not pay. The body only

Canst thou slay: no right hast thou to cause a tear.

[To MELITTA].—

Look not beseechingly at me! thy eyes
So mildly pleading for the pitiless.
Compassion! thou know'st her not.
Is not the dagger glancing from her hand?
Two others hidden by the sunken lids
Will pierce thee deeper still.

[*He takes up the dagger that SAPPHO had suffered to fall from her hand.*

This steel—I'll bear it here, on my warm heart,
By her betrayed! and when, in coming time,
I dwell with sad and tender grief on what
She was, one glance upon this steel my soul
Shall heal.

Sappho [*raises her eyes and looks at him*].—

Phaon!

Phaon—

O listen not! the tears

Are false: they lure thee to the dagger's point!

Sappho [*still looking at him*].—

Phaon!

Phaon— Look not at her! False as her hand,

Her eye will kill.

Melitta— She weeps!

Phaon—

Weeping, she weaves

New charms. Go forth!

Melitta—

Shall I, thus suffering,

Leave her?

Phaon—

Me will her tears infect! haste forth

Before her serpent charms enfold us both.

[*He leads MELITTA forth.*

Melitta [*returning*].—

Ah, no! I'll leave her not. *Sappho*!

Sappho [*with stifled voice*].—

Call'st thou,

Melitta?

Melitta [*rushes to her and embraces her knees*].—

Sappho! the rose! my life! take it! take both!

Where is thy dagger?

Phaon [*hastens after, seizes the rose with both hands, and draws*

MELITTA away].— 'Tis thine! 'tis thine! no god

Shall rob thee of it. Come quickly! hasten

From her presence forth!

[*He leads MELITTA off. SAPPHO stretches out her arms to them, and then falls fainting back.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

The same open green near the grotto and the temple. Moonlight.

Sappho [enters sunk in deep thought; after a pause] —

Am I still here? Does the firm earth remain?

This living empire! In that tearful hour

Fell it not all in fragments? The brooding

Darkness that surrounds me! Is it the night,

And not the grave? They say a monstrous pain

Will kill. It is not so, for Sappho lives!

How still is all around! the air is mute!

Life's various tones are hushed! echoes

No sound from out the unstirred leaves!

And solitary, like a homeless child,

My weeping voice goes wandering through the night.

Ah! could I sleep! sleep like the birds so gently

Rocked, without alarm or fear, so safely

Cradled, lulled in a deep slumber, where

All — all sleeps, and even the pulse is still,

No fearful morning beam waking to pain.

No ingrate —

Ah, hold! touch not the serpent!

[With stifled voice.]

Murder's a crime, and robbery, and lust,

The horrid brood of hydra-headed sin,

That from the deep abyss of flaming hell

Infect this world with poison-breathing breath.

Yet one I know, a crime, whose deadly stain

To lily fairness turns the others white.

Its name, ingratitude. Alone, it does

What all the others only singly do —

It robs, it lies, deceives; it swears false oaths,

Betrays and murders. Ah! ingratitude!

Ingratitude, ingratitude!

Protect

Me! O ye gods! Protect me from myself!

Him, only him from destiny I prayed;

Alone, selected him alone, from all

That pressed with homage at my feet. Him

Only on the summit would I place

Above the grave and death. On glory's wings

I'd borne him on to glory's deathless fame!

All crowns would I have wound around his head,
And asked one word alone from him. And he —
Do you then live? immortal gods!

[*After a pause, SAPPHO seems struck with a new thought*] —

Ye live!

From you the thought that lightened through my soul:
Let me it seize — that passing thought so fleet.
To Chios, say'st thou, shall Melitta go?
To Chios; there, divided from her crime,
Love's fault, love's torments shall atone. —

Rhamnes!

Thus let it be. — Rhamnes! In vain I call. —
Immortal gods! I thank thee for the thought.
Soon shall it be fulfilled!

Rhamnes [*enters*] —

You called. I wait. What wouldst thou, Sappho?

Sappho [*without observing RHAMNES*] —

She is my work! without me, what were she?
What can deprive the builder of his right
That to destroy, himself has formed, his own?
Destroy! can Sappho do it? Ah, her hope —
It stands too firm for my weak hand. To Chios
Should he follow, led by his love, more blest
Her fate amid the herd of slaves, than I —
Than Sappho in her golden, empty house.
How sweet it is to suffer for the loved,
When memory and hope, twin roses rare,
Together on one stem unite! O, then
The thorn's unknown! O banish me, ye gods!
Far in the sea's remotest isle, upon a rock
Washed by the surf, with only clouds and sky above,
My only friendly neighbors, from the paths
Of living men shut out. O then erase
From out the book of memory, the last few hours.
Alone — leave me alone, my faith in his
True love, and I will bless my fate. Ah!
Solitude is not where memory dwells!
At every thorn that pierced my naked foot,
At every want and loss of ease, I'd think,
"What would he give to spare and save me pain."
A balsam, cooling, poured o'er every wound.

Rhamnes —

Sappho! you called.

Sappho —

O Phaon, Phaon!

What had I done? I stood so calm, alone,

With poet's lyre, upon the poet's open
 Height, and saw beneath of life the joys and pains
 That reached me not. Of flowers alone
 Was wreathed the poet's crown. The silent hours
 I counted not. Freely I gave my song;
 It gave me back content, and ever living
 Youth to crown my head. — Then, the traitor came.
 With hasty hand he rent the golden veil
 Of trust, and drew me to the weary desert
 Down, where no footstep echoes, and no path
 Expands. Within that desert space, his hand
 Alone was near; that he withdrew, and fled!

Rhamnes —

Sappho! why alone the desert night thus
 Wander? The ocean's chill betrays thy trust.

Sappho —

Betrays! Rhamnes! dost thou know a crime
 So black and heavy as ingratitude?

Rhamnes —

Alas, not one!

Sappho —

More vilely venomous?

Rhamnes —

Truly, I do not.

Sappho —

Worthy of curses

And of punishment!

Rhamnes —

In truth, it merits

Every curse.

Sappho —

Oh, true, most true! open and bold

Are other vices. Hyenas, lions, tigers,

Wolves! a serpent is ingratitude, so

Fair and crafty, so beautiful and smooth,

The poisonous serpent! Oh, so fair!

Rhamnes —

Come in. Within thou art better. With care

And love thy dwelling is adorned! and Phaon

Waits thee in the hall.

Sappho —

How! Phaon waits — for me?

Rhamnes —

Yes; I saw him musing and reflecting,

Walking to and fro; sometimes he rested

Motionless! spake softly to himself; then

Hastened to the window, and sent his sighs,

Thee seeking through the night.

Sappho —

He waits

For me, for Sappho waits! Did he say that?

Rhamnes —

He said not that, but still he waits ; for whom
Should Phaon wait, if not for Sappho ?

Sappho —

For whom ?

For whom ? Not for thy Sappho, Rhamnes. Yet
Shall he wait in vain. Rhamnes !

Rhamnes —

Sappho ! ah !

Sappho —

Thou know'st at Chios dwells my father's friend,
Erewhile a guest of mine.

Rhamnes —

I know it well.

Sappho —

Loose quick the boat from the near shore. It rocks
So idly in the brook. This night thou must
To Chios.

Rhamnes — Alone ?

Sappho —

No, no.

[A pause.

Rhamnes —

Who then will go

With me there ?

Sappho —

What didst thou say ?

Rhamnes —

To Chios,

Who goes with me there ?

Sappho [*leads RHAMNES to the other side of the stage*] —

Prudent and quiet

Must thou be. Attend ! to Melitta's room
Proceed, and say, "that Sappho calls, she must
Obey ;" but softly, that *he* hear her not.

Rhamnes —

Who ?

Sappho — Phaon ! yet should he follow thee —

[*She stops.*

Rhamnes —

What then ?

Sappho —

Bring her, with force or mildness bring,

But softly, to the unmoored boat, and on

To Chios. Go instantly !

Rhamnes —

And, when there ?

Sappho —

There give her to my friend. For Sappho's love

He will protect her slave. Severe — no, not

Severe his treatment be. Ah ! the very act

Of banishment is punishment enough.

Rhamnes ! dost hear ?

Rhamnes —

I'm gone already.

Sappho —

Delay not ! hasten !

Rhamnes — Sappho! farewell!
Before the morning dawns, I'm far from hence.

Sappho [*alone*] —
He goes! — yet, no, I'll call him back! Custom's
A weary thing. It fetters us to that
We hate.

[*She is lost in thought*] —
Listen! a footstep! no, the wind
Stirred through the leaves. How beats my heart
Within my storm-moved breast, as if it were
A guilty thing. Voices! hark! she comes! she
Follows willingly. She dreams not 'tis the last!
I will — I cannot see her. I must flee!

[*SAPPHO goes quickly off.*]

Melitta —
Here, saidst thou, Sappho waited? She's not here!

Rhamnes [*looks round embarrassed*] —
Not here? Come on — not there? yet was she here
A moment since. Come on!

Melitta —
On where?

Rhamnes — She may indeed be at the sea;
She's wandered forth there to the brook.

Melitta — There goes
She never.

Rhamnes — Perhaps to-night —

Melitta — And why to-night?

Rhamnes —
And — why? Ei? Because even now she gave
The order thee to bring —

[*Aside, embarrassed*] — What shall I say?

Melitta —
Rhamnes! you are to-night so strange! Why turn
Your eyes embarrassed from my glance? tell me
Where Sappho waits, that I may seek her will;
But know'st thou not — so, let me then depart.

Rhamnes — Hold!
Thou dar'st not go.

Melitta — Why not?

Rhamnes — Thou must with me.

Melitta —
With thee! and where?

Rhamnes — Come to the boat. Thou'lt know.

Melitta —
Ye gods! what is it then?

- Rhamnes* — Come, maiden, come;
The hour is pressing — midnight is well past.
Forth must we now.
- Melitta* — What wouldst thou do? Go forth
To-night upon the great, far-lying deep?
- Rhamnes* —
Be tranquil, child! 'Tis not so far — Chios
Is not so far.
- Melitta* — To Chios! never!
- Rhamnes* — Thou must
Indeed! So Sappho orders.
- Melitta* — Sappho! say'st
'Thou? Go! I will to her — yes, at her feet:
She'll hear and judge.
- Rhamnes* [*holds her*] — Stir not! not from this spot!
- Melitta* —
How, Rhamnes! thou!
- Rhamnes* — Eh, then! what can I do?
Thus ordered Sappho: Rhamnes must obey!
- Melitta* —
O let me move thee thus! Here will I kneel
Before thee, Rhamnes! Listen to my prayer.
And is there none, none that will lend an ear?
- Rhamnes* —
In vain you call. Come on!
- Melitta* — Never! never!
Will no one pity?
- Phaon* [*rushes in*] — Melitta's voice I hear!
Audacious man! dar'st thou thy hand 'gainst her
To raise?
- [*RHAMNES lets MELITTA go.*]
My fears deceived me not, when wolflike
Thou, spying around, crept near her chamber door.
Grim wolf! the shepherd watched to save the lamb.
- Rhamnes* —
Sir, I follow but the orders I receive.
- Phaon* —
How! Sappho's orders? Sappho orders this?
Sappho! Sappho! I know thee now too well,
And yet, alas! too late. Wherefore too late?
There yet is time the bondage to throw off
That binds us both. By heaven! I will!
- [*To RHAMNES*] —
Wherefore, thou all too ready minister
Of crime! wherefore —
Melitta! thou art pale!

Melitta —

Oh, I am well.

Phaon — Go, slave! and thank the gods
No ready stone came to my hand! By Heaven!
For every tear, a death pang shouldst thou pay.

[*To MELITTA*] —

Thou art weary. Lean upon me; firmer
Support thou'lt never find.

[*To RHAMNES*] — Look at her, slave!

Look at the lovely child. This, of the gods
The fairest work, thou'd injure.

Rhamnes — Injure!

The gods forbid!

Phaon — What then?

Rhamnes — Only —but pardon —

What I would do I cannot now betray.

Suffer me then to go.

Phaon — By all the gods!

Until I know the measure of your crime,
From hence you stir not.

Rhamnes — Melitta must with me —

Phaon —

Where?

Rhamnes — That is my Mistress' secret, 'tis safe
Within her servant's breast, and goes not forth.

Phaon [*draws the dagger*] —

I thank thee, Sappho! this point shall draw it forth.
Against thyself thou hast furnished arms.

Melitta —

Spare him! To Chios, were his orders.

Phaon — Chios!

Melitta —

Yes; there dwells a friend of Sappho's. Melitta
There would be well cared for.

Phaon — 'Tis o'er the sea!

Melitta —

A boat rocks in the brook.

Phaon — A boat, saidst thou?

Melitta —

Is't not, my father, so?

Rhamnes — Call me not father,

Ingrate! Sappho's betrayer!

Phaon — A boat! a boat!

Ye gods! the sign from you I take. From you
It comes. The truth too late I understood!

Melitta only — she or none else bears
 In her breast the second half of this, that
 Longing beats in mine. Yourselves, ye gods!
 You point the way that I will follow. Melitta!
 Yes, to Chios thou shalt go; but not alone.
 With me, safe at my side.

Melitta —

With him? with him?

Phaon —

Yes, we will leave this hostile land. Envy
 And hate — revenge, with its Medusa head,
 Follows thy steps, its death snare spreads. Come,
 The boat is there, courage and strength are here.
 To shield thee 'gainst the world.

[*He takes her in his arms.*]

Melitta [*anxiously to RHAMNES*] —

Rhamnes!

Rhamnes [*to PHAON*] —

Reflect,

Bold man!

Phaon —

Think of thyself. Within my hand

Rests thy vile life.

Rhamnes —

Sir, she is Sappho's slave.

Phaon —

Liar! She is mine! dear as my life.

[*To MELITTA*] —

Come!

Melitta, follow thou!

Rhamnes —

The dwellers here,

Within this land, honor our Sappho's like

A crowned head. Ready they are to rise

At the first call, her rights to guard; in arms

Her threshold to protect. A word from me,

And hundreds rush together.

Phaon —

I thank thee,

Slave; almost I had forgot with whom

And where I am. Thou goest with me.

Rhamnes —

I — go —

Phaon —

Yes, thou! but only to the boat. Sappho

I envy not such slaves as thou. When once

Secure, thou may'st turn back and tell. Enough!

Thou goest —

Rhamnes —

Never!

Phaon [*drawing the dagger*] — I have, I think, that

Will enforce thy duty.

[*RHAMNES retreats, and PHAON follows with the dagger.*]

Melitta [*following*] —

Phaon! forbear!

Rhamnes [*has drawn himself far back to the other side*] —

Alas for age, that has the will, but not

The power to act.

Phaon [*draws near MELITTA*] — Now, maiden! Come! away!

Melitta —

Ah! where?

Phaon — On to the boat.

Melitta [*turns from him, hastening to the foreground, and kneels*] —

Ye gods! ah, shall I?

Phaon —

Come! the wide, protecting distance calls!

Her arms expand and open to thee — invite

Beyond the old gray sea, where dwells sweet peace,

Security, and love. Under the broad,

Deep roof, formed by the linden boughs, that

Shelter still the parent's home, *Melitta*!

Dearest, there vaults the temple of our love!

There — thou tremblest, bride! O tremble not, betrothed!

Thy bridegroom's hand holds thine, embraced. O come!

And wilt thou not? By all the gods, this hand

Shall bear thee hence; and on, and on, and forth,

Even to the ends of this wide earth.

Melitta —

Phaon!

Phaon —

Come! the stars shine friendly down. Gently

The sea swells up to meet the breeze, and

Amphitrite is love itself.

Rhamnes —

Sir, 'twill cost thy life.

[*They all go out*]

Eucharis [*appears on the steps*] —

Methinks I hear his voice — no, none is here!

Over this house bad spirits seem to rule;

No joy is here, Sappho's return to greet.

Anxious and timid all the people are.

I seek *Melitta*, and find her chamber void.

Our Sappho wanders, plaintive and alone,

Through the mirk night.

'Tis *Rhamnes*' voice! hush! listen!

Rhamnes [*at a distance*] —

I call for help. Ho! Sappho's slaves!

Eucharis —

He calls!

He's wholly breathless! *Rhamnes*, what's happened?

Rhamnes [*hastily*] —

Up! up from your idle beds, good friends!

The fugitives pursue! your help I ask!

Eucharis —

What's happened?

Rhamnes —

Ask not! call Sappho and her slaves!

Eucharis —

But wherefore?

Rhamnes —

There is no time for words. Hasten!

Awake the house! hasten and save! I can

No more. Betrayer! slave! exult not yet!

The pious gods, the ocean deities —

They will revenge the rash, unworthy crime.

[*Many of the People with SAPPHO'S Servants enter*] —

The people call! haste quickly to the shore!

Shout loud the cry, the help-beseeching cry!

Ask not for what, but let the tocsin sound.

Sappho [*enters to the former*] —

What frightful noise disturbs the quiet night,

And frights the weary sleep-destroyer, grief,

From her sad office? Who can complain near

Sappho's deeper pain?

Rhamnes —

I, O my mistress!

Sappho —

Thou, Rhamnes! here! Where is Melitta?

Rhamnes —

Gone forth!

Sappho —

Gone forth! and thou yet here!

Rhamnes —

Escaped!

Sappho —

Forbear!

Rhamnes —

Escaped with Phaon! My arm, and

My weak age he overpowered — fled with

His booty o'er the waves; and the same boat,

Our captive boat, now bears them both away.

Sappho —

Rhamnes, thou liest!

Rhamnes —

Would that I did! would that

This time I lied!

Sappho —

O where remain your

Lightnings, O ye gods? For Sappho's heart

Alone have ye reserved your curse? Deaf is

Your ear, and lame the vengeful arm? Send down

The thunder crash, the lightning's piercing shaft;

Crush the betrayer's head, as ye have crushed

The heart of Sappho.

In vain; no arrow swift

The air divides. The wind woos lovingly

The bending leaves; the sea bears swiftly on—
On its broad breast the freight of love, and rocks
The boat to its far shore.

There is no help!

Sappho herself shall aid.

[*The plain becomes gradually filled with slaves bearing torches, and with crowds of Country People.*

Ah, friends! my thanks! you're true! I thank your love.
Go, go, my countrymen! and what the gods
Your Sappho now deny, your arms procure.
If ever ye have held her dear, revenge
Her now; now is the time to prove your love.

[*Goes round, addressing many of them*]—

Thou, Myron, oft has sworn; and thou, Terpander;
Think of our hymns, O Pheres, Lychas thou!
And thou, Zenarchos! All, all are my friends!
Haste to the strand! there man the boats, and follow,
Swift-winged, follow the betrayer's bark.
Think that I wait in torments here alone;
That every hour a hundred daggers pierce,
Till your return, this grief-torn breast. Who brings
Him back, whoe'er the joy creates that in
His eyes I look, and ask, "What have I done
That thou shouldst kill me thus?"—

[*She bursts into tears*]—

Not that, not that!

Revenge alone! who brings me that shall have
My gold, my life! Upon the winds, swiftly
Upon the rushing winds, go forth!

A Countryman—

Without him

We return not back!

Sappho—

I thank you, friends!

Within your hands my life I lay. O may
My wishes give you wings, and my revenge
Nerve every arm! Haste only! only hasten!

[*The People and Servants go off. SAPPHO presses both hands upon her heart.*

They're gone! now I am well! now will I rest!

Eucharis—

Sappho, you tremble!

Rhamnes—

Sappho, ah, you fail.

Sappho—[*sinks back into the arms of EUCHARIS*]—

O let me die! Why hold me from the grave?

ACT V.

Scene, the same. The day breaking with the beautiful crimson suffusion described in the beginning of the first act. SAPPHO is half lying upon the turf bank, supported by EUCHARIS. In the distance are many Servants watching.

RHAMNES comes forward, and EUCHARIS places her finger on her lips in sign of silence.

Eucharis —

Still, O still!

Rhamnes — She sleeps?

Eucharis — Her eyes are open.

The body wakes, the spirit seems to sleep.

Thus has she lain three hours, thus motionless.

Rhamnes —

You should have borne her to the house.

Eucharis —

Alone,

I'd not the power. Is nothing seen?

Rhamnes —

Not yet.

Far as the eye can reach, are sea and clouds,

But of a boat no trace appears.

Sappho [*starting up*] —

A boat!

And where?

Rhamnes — None yet we see, O Sappho!

Sappho [*sinking again into the arms of EUCHARIS*] —

Not yet! not yet!

Rhamnes —

The morning air blows fresh.

To lead you to your room, Sappho, I pray!

[*SAPPHO makes a sign of denial.*

O be persuaded! follow to the house.

[*SAPPHO refuses.*

Rhamnes [*retreating*] —

Alas!

Your sorrow wounds; it cuts me to the heart.

Eucharis —

O see! Why throng the people thus? Up from

The shore they stream. Climb thou the rock and look.

[*SAPPHO springs up, and stands, bent forward, listening anxiously.*

Rhamnes —

The gods be thanked! they come upon the left.

That wooded point, far in the water thrust,

Conceals the welcome sight. A crowd of boats.

With flashing oars fly past each other,
And near the shore.

Eucharis— The fugitives — are they with them?

Rhamnes—

The sun so blinds I know them not. Yet hold!
One nears the shore, a messenger. The prow,
It strikes. The shepherd from the vale it is.
He flourishes his staff. They prisoners
Are, 'tis certain. Here, my friends, here! approach!

Eucharis —

Sappho, be calm, be self-possessed.

Countryman [enters]—

Health, Sappho! health to thee!

Eucharis —

A prisoner

Is he?

Countryman — Yes.

Rhamnes — Then where?

Eucharis —

And how ?

Countryman — Bravely on

They held. We, all unskilled in steering, to reach
Them was, I feared, in vain. In the broad sea
At last we spied his boat, and then the race
Began. Soon was he reached, and soon inclosed.
But he, with the left arm seizing the girl,
The dagger in his hand — Shall I go on ?

[SAPPHO hints that he shall proceed.

Dagger in hand, he towards us rushed. A blow
Of force, aimed with the oar, the little
Maiden struck, and wounded on the brow.

[SAPPHO conceals her eyes with her hands.

She sank. Lifting, he bore her in his arms;
And we seizing that moment, our prisoner
He became. Already they are landing there.
Behold them both. The maiden wavers, faints.

Sappho —

Not here ! not here !

Rhamnes —

Where else? Already

Are they here.

Sappho — Who'll save me from this hour? **Thou,**
Aphrodite! thy votary protect!

[SAPPHO hastens to the background, and ascends the steps of the altar. Her Servants and People throng around her. PHAON supporting MELITTA. Country People. SAPPHO with her Servants in the background.]

Phaon —

Forbear! To touch her let none venture now.
 Although disarmed, not without arms am I.
 Each limb in her defense becomes an arm.
 Melitta, here! ah, tremble not! no ill,
 While I have breath, shall touch thy life! Villains!
 Look at that lovely head, so innocent!
 Men are you, and could injure her? This
 Only could a woman do! Revenge and
 Cowardice belong to women.

[*Looking at one of the men*] — 'Twas thou
 That raised the impious hand against her!
 I know thee! Forth! lest I defraud the gods,
 The avengers, of their prey.

[*To MELITTA*] — How art thou,
 Love?

Melitta — Well.

Phaon — Thy glance denies it. Thou art pale,
 Thou tremblest! 'Tis the first lie thy lips have
 Ever spoken. Here, rest upon this bank,
 Where first thy limpid, heaven-clear eye first
 Opened for me, and with its beaming light,
 Like morning's glow, chased sleep forever from me;
 Here, where love began its gentle work — here
 Shall it be fulfilled.

[*To the others*] — Speak! where is Sappho?

Melitta —

O Phaon, rouse her not!

Phaon — Be calm. Am I
 Not free? Who gave the right my steps to hem?
 From Hellas justice has not fled. This
 Shall the proud one learn. Melitta, come;
 To Sappho let us hasten.

A Countryman [*barring the way*] —

Thou must remain.

Phaon —

Who dares to hold me, who?

The People —

All who are here!

Phaon —

I! a free man!

A Countryman — Thou wert, but now a
 Penalty is due.

Phaon — A penalty, and why?

Countryman —

The robbery of a slave is held a crime.

Phaon —

Sappho demands a ransom, and were it
Croesus' treasure, it should be paid!

Countryman —

You,

It becomes to plead, and not to dictate.

Phaon —

Are you so abject, tame, to bend your heads,
Your manly hands to lend, to aid a woman's
Hate, to serve the changing humors of her love?
To stand by me I ask, and to avenge
My wrong.

Countryman — Of right or wrong, 'tis Sappho must
Decide.

Phaon — Thou ancient man! and dost not blush
Such abject words to speak. Who then is Sappho,
That on her tongue the scale of justice hangs?
Is she the umpire in this land?

Countryman —

She is,

For love. Not that she orders, but we, we
Willingly obey.

Phaon —

Her charms she's woven

Over all. How far the enchantment reaches
I will see. On, on to her presence.

[He endeavors to go to the house.

Countryman —

Back!

Phaon —

In vain you threaten; Sappho I will see.
She trembles at my presence. There, at yon
Altar, her I see, her servants kneeling round.

*[PHAON presses through the crowd. The circle of Slaves opens, and
SAPPHO is seen kneeling on the steps.*

What wouldst thou on the altar steps! The gods
Hear not the impious prayer!

*[He takes SAPPHO'S arm. At his touch she starts up, and hastens
from the altar, without looking at him. PHAON follows her.*

Avoid me, wouldst thou? Thou must with me speak!

Ah, tremble, Sappho! 'Tis thy turn to

Tremble now. Know'st thou what thou hast done?

What right to venture hadst thou, to detain,

A freeman to detain, in shameful bonds?

Thy slaves, in unaccustomed arms, to send,

To make a prisoner of the free? Speak!

So silent now! The poet's lip is dumb!

Sappho —

Too much! it is too much!

Thee thus ? Ah, look at me ! turn not thine eyes
 So timidly from mine ! Let me thy face
 Pursue ; ah, let me know if 'tis thyself.
 Are these the lips I've touched, and those the eyes
 So heavenly smiled ? Ah, Sappho, thou art
 Sappho still !

[*He turns her toward him, and their eyes meet.*

Sappho [*shuddering*] —

Alas !

Phaon —

Yet art thou Sappho ! that was Sappho's voice.
 Whate'er I've said, the wind shall bear away ;
 No root of bitterness from either heart
 Shall spring. Clear as the sun after the storm
 Beams out, the memory of the past shall be.
 Oh, welcome it, and be to me again
 What once thou wert, ere I had seen thee thus,
 But in my distant home adored unseen —
 The image of the godlike ; and, erring since,
 Have for a human form mistaken. Be thou
 Once more a goddess ! bless once more !

Sappho —

Deceiver !

Phaon —

No ; that I am not. If love I swore, 'twas
 Never to deceive. I loved thee as the gods
 Are loved ! as we adore the beautiful
 And good. Descend we then to lower worlds
 Unpunished, from the banquet of the gods ?
 The hand the golden lyre does consecrate,
 Is severed from all meaner work.
 Myself, wavering in empty frenzy
 Of the mind, in contest with the world
 And with myself, thee I beheld. Inexplicable,
 With bands invisible, but strong, thou drew
 Me from mine own, to thee. My dream of thee
 Too humble was for scorn, too elevate
 For love. Ah, happy only can the equal
 Love !

Then saw I her, and the deep fount
 Of joy sprang up towards heaven ! till then,
 The secret fountain of my life. Melitta !
 Come ! plead thou ! O, be not timid. Sappho
 Is mild and good. Unveil the liquid crystal
 Of thine eye, that she within thy breast may look,
 And all thy spotless innocence perceive !

Melitta [*approaches SAPPHO timidly*] —

Sappho! beloved!

Sappho [*rejecting her*] — Forth! leave me!

Melitta —

Ah, she's displeased!

Phaon —

Ah, she is yet all that I feared to think.

Leave her, *Melitta*! return again to me.

Thou shalt not plead. The proud shall not before

My eyes reject and scorn thy prayer. She

Knows thee not, else she would kneel to thee;

The guilty to the just. Silence thy prayer;

Return to me!

Melitta — No; let me kneel. The child

It suits to kneel before its mother; to

Believe her chiding just. Never against

Her will, will I again rebel.

Phaon —

'Tis not thyself alone thou humblest. By

This humility you injure me. Means

May be found our wishes to fulfill.

Melitta —

O say not so. A gift alone, to me

Were freedom dear. Compelled, a burthen!

Here will I kneel; a gentle look alone,

A gracious word my pardon shall confirm!

How often, *Sappho*, at thy feet I've knelt,

How oft have risen joyfully in tears!

Thou wilt not leave me weeping now for grief!

Look down upon thy child, my *Sappho*!

[*SAPPHO remains with her head resting upon the shoulder of*
EUCARIS.

Phaon —

Canst thou thus cold and silent listen?

Melitta —

She is not cold — though silent are her lips,

I feel her heart speaking to mine. *Sappho*!

Decide 'twixt him and me. Commandeth thou

To follow *Phaon*, cheerfully I go!

And bidst thou stay, O gods! I stay. *Sappho*,

Thou tremblest! Dost thou hear thy child?

Phaon [*throws his arms around MELITTA and kneels with her*] —

Love give to men, and to the gods ambition.

Give us our own, and take thou mine, O *Sappho*!

Think who thou art, and what thou dost, O friend!

[**SAPPHO**, at the last appeal, rises and looks intently at the kneeling lovers, then turns quickly and goes out without speaking. **EUCHARIS** and the Servants follow.]

Melitta —

Alas, she flies! She has her child denied!

Phaon —

Arise, my child! kneel not to men, nor pray —
The gods for us remain, and we ourselves!

Melitta —

I cannot live beneath her frown. The glass
In which I read my faults was always
Sappho's eye. It shows me now deformed. Alas!
How must she suffer — the injured one!

Phaon —

To her, thou lendest all thyself. Far other
Waves swell her proud breast!

Melitta —

Is Sappho proud?

To me she ever was indulgent, good.
If sometimes harsh, the harsh outside concealed
The sweet and tender fruit. Alas, alas!
That I could e'er forget her tenderness!

Rhamnes —

Alas for thee indeed, that thou couldst e'er
Forget.

Phaon [to **RHAMNES**] —

Is Sappho then so good and mild?

Why tremble then?

Rhamnes —

She angered as she went; and

Without limit, like her love, her anger
Ever burns.

Phaon —

What can she threaten?

Rhamnes —

A slave's

Escape is death!

Phaon —

Who dare say that?

Rhamnes —

The laws

Have so decreed.

Phaon —

I will protect Melitta.

Rhamnes —

Thou? and who will then protect thyself?

Phaon —

And did the earth now gape; thundered the sea
To swallow all; the powers of air and earth
Could she combine; firm would I hold Melitta,
Herself and all her threats despise!

Rhamnes —

Despise!

And Sappho? Who then art thou, thy voice
 To raise against the voice of men! To speak
 Where Greece has spoken? Madman and fool! **thou**
 Hast no scale her worth to gauge, therefore to
 Thee 'tis valueless. The jewel has no
 Worth, because thy eyes are blind. She loved thee!
 From the dust she raised thee up, unthankful
 Serpent that thou art, that now thy venom'd tooth
 Hast fleshed within her heart. On thee
 Her riches lavished; on thee, who had, to feel
 Their worth, no heart! This only stain in all
 Her precious life!

Speak not! the very pride
 That rises now against her is not thine.
 How from thy lowliness hast risen, thou
 (Of the forgotten most forgot), to murmur
 'Gainst the pearl of Greece, 'gainst Hellas' fairest
 Jewel? She looked upon and gave thee pride,
 That now thou darest rebel.

Phaon —

The poet's fame

With her contest I not.

Rhamnes [*with scorn*] —

Thou ventarest not?

As though thou couldst! Her name upon the stars
 She has traced with diamond-pointed letters,
 And only with the stars 'twill fade away.
 In distant lands, among strange men, 'twill
 Echo, long after these our mortal frames
 Have perished, our graves no more are found.
 Then Sappho's soul will speak from out strange lips;
 Her songs will live embalmed in unknown tongues,
 And thine, thy name will live! Be proud of thy
 Undying name! In distant lands, by men
 Unknown, when centuries have passed away,
 And time has swallowed all, 'twill echo then
 From every mouth, "'Twas Sappho sang the song,
 And Phaon caused her death."

Melitta —

O Phaon, thou!

Phaon —

Peace! be still!

Rhamnes —

Poor comforter thou art.

Thou **callest** peace with fear-compelled voice.
 Thy crime thou knowest, and tremblest at revenge.
 Sappho **thou** not fail! The poet's fame with her
 You'll venture not to contest. Her heart alone

You doubt. Observe, and look about thee well;
 What is there here to thank but Sappho's heart?
 Not one is here she has not blest; not one
 Who owes not house or field to her; estate
 Or goods by her mild rule improved. Others
 Richer traces bear of Sappho's gentle
 Sway. Not one, whose heart not higher beats,
 Himself to name as man of Mytilene,
 The countryman of Sappho. Ask the trembler
 At thy side, companion she has been,
 Far more than slave. What had she then to offer
 Thee, which was not Sappho's work? Does she then
 Charm? 'tis Sappho's mind speaks from her lips;
 And from Melitta's eyes beams Sappho's soul.
 Press not thy brows; in vain thou striv'st; in vain
 Thy crime from memory to erase. What wouldst
 Thou do? Where flee? For thee upon this earth
 There's no asylum more! no refuge here
 For thee! In every pious breast will rise
 A witness 'gainst the false, the false to love;
 To beauty treacherous. Before thy steps
 Will go the rumor of thy crime. Fame,
 Trumpet-tongued in human ears, will shriek,
 "Behold the traitor to the gods, the false
 To Sappho!" And shouldst thou free as air thus
 Wander, with Melitta wander through the land;
 With her, to whom protection is a crime,
 No Greek for thee would open wide his door,
 No temple gate would on its hinges turn;
 Trembling thou'd flee from altar steps to altar,
 Where the priest's sentence called thee "the profane."
 Eumenides, avenging furies grim,
 Shaking their serpent hair, would follow on,
 And shriek within thy ears the injured
 Sappho's name, till the grave yawned for thee —

Melitta —

Forbear! forbear!

Phaon —

A maniac wouldst thou make me?

Rhamnes —

That wert thou when thou scorned the good.

Enjoy the fruit thou hast planted.

Melitta —

Let us to her.

Phaon —

Who'll save me from this torment?

EUPHARIS enters.

Eucharis —

Rhamnes, thou art here! come! hasten!

Rhamnes —

Whither?

Eucharis —

To Sappho. I fear she is ill.

Rhamnes —

The gods

Forbid!

Eucharis — I followed her afar, till gained
 The largest hall. Concealed, and with sharp eye,
 Her motions all I watched. Leaning, and raised
 Upon a pedestal, she looked far o'er
 The distant sea, that raged and chafed upon
 The rock-bound coast. With pallid cheek and eyes,
 Veiled with their lids, all motionless she stood,
 Among those marble statues, one of them.
 Only she seized upon the altar flowers,
 The gold and ornaments within her reach,
 And cast them, musing, deep in the raging sea.
 Their fall with longing eyes she seemed to follow.
 I nearer drew; but now a sound I heard
 That shook her inmost soul. Suspended from
 On high, the sea breeze touched the lyre,
 And pensive played within its untuned strings;
 Deep sighing, she looked up, and all her being
 Thrilled, shaken invisibly by higher
 Powers. Her eyes with a strange fire illumed,
 A lovely smile played o'er her mouth.
 The firm-closed lips were parted now, and words
 Came forth so solemn and profound they seemed
 Not Sappho's words, but edicts of the gods!
 "O friend!" she said, "thou dost admonish me
 Of passing time; O thanks! I understand
 Thee well." How the wall she gained, and how
 The lyre high-hanging reached, I know not.
 Her arm, a beam of light it seemed; and as
 I looked she held the lyre and pressed the strings
 Upon her storm-moved breast; while audibly
 The breathing sounds came forth and passed away.
 Suspended as a votive wreath upon
 The domestic altar, hung her crown; she took
 And wound it round her head; the purple robe,
 A glowing veil, o'er her fair shoulders threw.
 Who first had seen her now, with lyre in hand, .

And look inspired, upraised, the altar steps
 Ascending, with her whole light form enwrapped
 In light, in prayer had bent his trembling knees,
 And hailed her the immortal. Silent
 And motionless she stood, yet through my limbs
 Crept shuddering fear; I quailed beneath
 Her piercing eye, and fled to thee.

Rhamnes —

Left her?

Return! yet see, herself comes near!

[*SAPPHO enters richly dressed as in the first act: the purple mantle on her shoulders, the laurel crown upon her head, and the golden lyre in her hand. She is surrounded by her women, and descends the steps of the marble colonnade.*]

Melitta —

Sappho! dearest mistress!

Sappho [*calm and earnest*] — What wouldst thou, then?

Melitta —

Rent is the bandage from my opened eyes.
 Let me again become thy slave. Receive
 Again what's thine, and pardon me.

Sappho —

So ill

Advised believe me not. No gift from thee
 Will Sappho take. That was my own, thou canst
 Not give nor take.

Phaon [*kneeling*] — O listen, Sappho!

Sappho —

Beware! kneel not to me; devoted am I to the gods!

Phaon —

With gentle eye thou look'st at me, O Sappho!
 Rememberest thou —

Sappho —

Thou speakest of things long past,
 Thee, Phaon, I sought! and found myself.
 Thou understood me not. Farewell! on firmer
 Ground my hopes must rest!

Phaon —

Hatest thou me, then?

Sappho —

Hatred! Love! Is there no third? Worthy wert
 Thou, and are so still, and ever will to me
 Be so; like a dear chance companion
 That accident awhile led in my boat. The goal
 Once reached, we part, each wandering on
 His path alone; yet often from the path,
 The widening path, recall the friendly meeting.

[*Her voice fails.*]

Phaon [*much moved*] —

O Sappho!

Sappho — Forbear! we part in peace!

[*To the others*] —

You, who have Sappho's weakness seen, O pardon!

To Sappho's weakness be ye reconciled!

The bow when bent first shows its power.

[*She points to the altar in the background*] — The flame

Is lit. To Aphrodite it mounts, clear as

The beam of coming day.

[*To her Servants and PHAON*] — And now remove!

Leave me to counsel with mine own—mine own!

Rhamnes —

Obey her will. Let all withdraw. [*They draw back.*]

Sappho [*approaches the altar that stands close to the cliff*] —

Ye lofty gods! divine! With blessings rich

You've crowned my life. My hand the muses' lyre

Has touched; the poet's cup for me runs o'er.

A heart to feel, a mind to think, and power

To form my thought to music, you have given.

With rich blessings you have blessed me. I thank you!

With victory you've crowned my feeble brow,

And sowed in distant lands the poet's fame,

Of immortality the seed. Echoes

From strangers' tongues the song I struck upon

My golden lyre, and only with the earth

The fame of Sappho dies.

I thank you!

In life's unmingled cup, crowned high with sweets,

The poet only sips, but does not drink.

Obedient to your highest wish, the sweet,

Unemptied cup I place aside, and drink not.

What you decreed, all-powerful gods,

Has Sappho finished! Deny me not

The last reward within your power to grant —

No weakness, no decay, let Sappho know.

In her full strength, in nature's bloom, O take

Her quickly to yourselves!

Forbid that e'er a priestess of the gods

Should be the theme of god-denying foes!

The sport of fools, in their own folly wise!

You bruised the flower, break now the stem;

Perfect in truth what was begun in love,

And spare the conflict's bleeding struggle. Grant,

O grant the victory! the victor's weakness spare!

The flame is kindling while the sun ascends !
 I feel I'm heard ! Great gods, I thank you !
 Melitta ! Phaon ! come nearer to me !

[*She kisses PHAON on the forehead*]—

A friend from distant worlds salutes thee thus !

[*Embracing MELITTA*]—

Thy mother, dead, sends thee this kiss ! Farewell !
 There, on the altar of love's goddess, love
 Fulfills, of love, the melancholy fate !

[*She hastens to the altar.*

Rhamnes—

What means she ? Inspired is all her being,
 The splendor of immortals wraps her round.

[*SAPPHO, who has gradually approached the edge of the cliff, upon which the altar stands, stretches both hands over MELITTA and PHAON.*

Sappho—

To men give love ! ambition to the gods !
 What for you blooms, enjoy, and think of Sappho !
 Of life the last debt I pay ! The gods,
 To you, grant blessings ; and to me — themselves.

[*She springs from the cliff into the sea.*

Phaon—

Hold ! Sappho ! hold !

Melitta—

Alas, she falls ! she dies.

Phaon [*busied with MELITTA*]—

Quick ! quick ! she dies ! Forth from the shore to save !

Rhamnes [*has climbed upon the rock*]—

The gods protect ! There on that cliff she falls ;
 There is she crushed, destroyed ! Bears she off ?
 Impossible ! alas ! too late !

Phaon—

Why weep

You here ? a boat ! haste ! haste to save her.

Rhamnes [*descending*]—

Forbear ! it is too late ! Grant her the grave
 The gods decree. That she, disdaining this
 False earth, within the sacred waves has
 Chosen for her rest.

Phaon—

Dead !

Rhamnes—

Dead !

Phaon—

Dead ! alas !

Impossible ! She is not dead ! not dead !

Rhamnes—

Withered the laurel ! broken are the strings ;
 Upon the earth there was no home for her ;
 To heaven has Sappho, to her own, returned !

THE WEAVERS.

A DRAMA OF THE FORTIES.

By GERHART HAUPTMANN.

TRANSLATED BY MARY MORISON.

[GERHART HAUPTMANN, at present the most noted of German dramatists, was born at Ober-Salzbrunn in Silesia, November 15, 1862, son of a hotel owner. At about sixteen he went to an uncle to learn farming; but this being distasteful, he entered in 1879 an art school to learn sculpture, and in 1882 went to Jena to study. After an Italian journey the next year, and residence in Hamburg and Dresden, in 1884 he attended lectures and engaged in literary work at Berlin, and marrying the next year, removed to that city. He began dramatic production at this time (1885) with no didactic purpose, in "Promethidenlos"; but shortly after fell under Ibsen's influence, and with a disciple's usual zeal left the master far in the rear in pessimism and the exaggeration of minor social evils into the ruling forces of society. Most of his plays since, some utterly squalid and some poetic, set forth the doctrine of the survival of the least fit, the rule of unrighteousness and corruption which overwhelms the few righteous, the working of heredity purely for evil and apparently never for good, the necessarily stationary or retrograde character of bad environments, and the invariable turning of poverty into gross and hopeless brutalization. "Before Sunrise" (1889) was the first of this order; then came "The Festival of Peace," "A Family Catastrophe" (1890), "Recluses" (1891), "The Weavers" (1892, also written in a dialect form), which disgusted him by drawing for audience the rabble he depicted and not the upper class he wished to convict of guilt, "Crampton College" (1892), "Hannele," a dream drama of a little girl starved and abused to death, which created a tremendous sensation all through Europe, largely on account of its subject, "Florian Geyer" (1895), and his latest, "The Sunken Bell" (1896), more poetic and less squalid, and not deformed by the excessive playing to the gallery which makes "Hannele" almost nauseous in many parts. He has also written a comedy, "The Beaver Skin" (1893); and a couple of stories, "The Apostle" and "Signalman Thiele" (1892). He lived in the Riesengebirge, the mountain border of Silesia, 1891-1894, then removed to Dresden to educate his children.]

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

DREISSIGER, fustian manufacturer.	HEIDE, police superintendent.
MRS. DREISSIGER.	KUTSCHE, policeman.
PFEFFER, manager	WELZEL, publican.
NEUMANN, cashier	MRS. WELZEL.
AN APPRENTICE	ANNA WELZEL.
JOHN, coachman	WIEGAND, joiner.
A MAID	A COMMERCIAL TRAVELLER.
WEINHOLD, tutor to DREISSIGER'S sons.	A PEASANT.
PASTOR KITTELHAUS.	A FORESTER.
MRS. KITTELHAUS.	SCHMIDT, surgeon.
	HORNIG, rag dealer.
	WITTIG, smith.

WEAVERS.

BECKER.	OLD HILSE.
MORITZ JAEGER.	MOTHER HILSE.
OLD BAUMERT.	GOTTLIEB HILSE.
MOTHER BAUMERT.	LUISE, GOTTLIEB'S wife.
BERTHA } BAUMERT.	MIELCHEN, their daughter (six years
EMMA } old).	
FRITZ, EMMA'S son (four years	REIMANN, weaver.
old).	HEIBER, weaver.
AUGUST BAUMERT.	A WEAVER'S WIFE.
OLD ANSORGE.	A number of Weavers, young and
MRS. HEINRICH.	old, of both sexes.

The action passes in the Forties, at Kaschbach, Peterswaldau, and Langenbielau, in the Eulengebirge.

ACT I.

A large whitewashed room on the ground floor of DREISSIGER'S house at Peterswaldau, where the weavers deliver their finished webs and the fustian is stored. To the left are uncurtained windows, in the back wall there is a glass door, and to the right another glass door, through which weavers, male and female, and children, are passing in and out. All three walls are lined with shelves for the storing of the fustian. Against the right wall stands a long bench, on which a number of weavers have already spread out their cloth. In the order of arrival each presents his piece to be examined by PFEIFER, DREISSIGER'S manager, who stands, with compass and magnifying glass, behind a large table, on which the web to be inspected is laid. When PFEIFER has satisfied himself, the weaver lays the fustian on the scale, and an office apprentice tests its weight. The same boy stores the accepted pieces on the shelves. PFEIFER calls out the payment due in each case to NEUMANN, the cashier, who is seated at a small table.

It is a sultry day towards the end of May. The clock is on the stroke of twelve. Most of the waiting workpeople have the air of standing before the bar of justice, in torturing expectation of a decision that means life or death to them. They are marked, too, by the anxious timidity characteristic of the receiver of charity, who has suffered many humiliations, and, conscious that he is barely tolerated, has acquired the habit of self-effacement. Add to this an expression on every face that tells of constant, fruitless brooding. There is a general resemblance among the men. They have something about them of the dwarf, something of the schoolmaster. The majority are flat breasted, short winded, sallow, and poor looking — creatures of the loom, their knees bent with much sitting. At a first glance the women show fewer typical traits. They look over-driven, worried, reckless, whereas the men still make some show of a pitiful

self-respect; and their clothes are ragged, while the men's are patched and mended. Some of the young girls are not without a certain charm, consisting in a waxlike pallor, a slender figure, and large, projecting, melancholy eyes.

Neumann [counting out money] — Comes to one and sevenpence halfpenny.

Weaver's Wife [about thirty, emaciated, takes up the money with trembling fingers] — Thank you, sir.

Neumann [seeing that she does not move on] — Well, something wrong this time, too?

Weaver's Wife [agitated, imploringly] — Do you think I might have a few pence in advance, sir? I need it that bad.

Neumann — And I need a few pounds. If it was only a question of needing it — ! *[Already occupied in counting out another weaver's money, shortly.]* It's Mr. Dreissiger who settles about pay in advance.

Weaver's Wife — Couldn't I speak to Mr. Dreissiger himself, then, sir?

Pfeifer [now manager, formerly weaver. The type is unmistakable, only he is well fed, well dressed, clean shaven; also takes snuff copiously. He calls out roughly] — Mr. Dreissiger would have enough to do if he had to attend to every trifle himself. That's what we are here for. *[He measures, and then examines through the magnifying glass.]* Mercy on us! what a draught! *[Puts a thick muffler round his neck.]* Shut the door, whoever comes in.

Apprentice [loudly to PFEIFER] — You might as well talk to stocks and stones.

Pfeifer — That's done! — Weigh! *[The weaver places his web on the scales.]* If you only understood your business a little better! Full of lumps again — I hardly need to look at the cloth to see them. Call yourself a weaver, and "draw as long a bow" as you've done there!

BECKER has entered. A young, exceptionally powerfully built weaver; offhand, almost bold in manner. PFEIFER, NEUMANN, and the Apprentice exchange looks of mutual understanding as he comes in.

Becker — Devil take it! This is a sweating job, and no mistake.

First Weaver [in a low voice] — This blazing heat means rain.

OLD BAUMERT *forces his way in at the glass door on the right, through which the crowd of weavers can be seen, standing shoulder to shoulder, waiting their turn. The old man stumbles forward and lays his bundle on the bench beside BECKER'S. He sits down by it, and wipes the sweat from his face.*

Old Baumert — A man has a right to a rest after that.

Becker — Rest's better than money.

Old Baumert — Yes, but we *needs* the money too. Good mornin' to you, Becker!

Becker — Morning, Father Baumert! Goodness knows how long we'll have to stand here again.

First Weaver — And what does that matter? What's to hinder a weaver's waitin' for an hour, or for a day if need be? What else is he there for?

Pfeifer — Silence there! We can't hear our own voices.

Becker [*in a low voice*] — This is one of his bad days.

Pfeifer [*to the weaver standing before him*] — How often have I told you that you must bring cleaner cloth! What sort of mess is this? Knots, and straw, and all kinds of dirt.

Reimann — It's for want of a new picker, sir.

Apprentice [*has weighed the piece*] — Short weight, too.

Pfeifer — I never saw such weavers. I hate to give out the yarn to them. It was another story in my day! I'd have caught it finely from my master for work like that. The business was carried on in different style then. A man had to know his trade — that's the last thing that's thought of now-days. Reimann, one shilling.

Reimann — But there's always a pound allowed for waste.

Pfeifer — I've no time. Next man! — What have you to show?

Heiber [*lays his web on the table. While PFEIFER is examining it, he goes close up to him; eagerly in a low tone*] — Beg pardon, Mr. Pfeifer, but I wanted to ask you, sir, if you would perhaps be so very kind as do me the favor an' not take my advance money off this week's pay.

Pfeifer [*measuring, and examining the texture; jeeringly*] — Well! What next, I wonder? This looks very much as if half the weft had stuck to the bobbins again.

Heiber [*continues*] — I'll be sure to make it all right next week, sir. But this last week I've had to put in two days' work on the estate. And my missus is ill in bed —

Pfeifer [giving the web to be weighed] — Another piece of real slop-work. [*Already examining a new web.*] What a sel-vage! Here it's broad, there it's narrow; here it's drawn in by the wefts goodness knows how tight, and there it's torn out again by the temples. And hardly seventy threads weft to the inch. What's come of the rest? Do you call this honest work? I never saw anything like it.

[*HEIBER, repressing tears, stands humiliated and helpless.*

Becker [in a low voice to BAUMERT] — To please that brute you would have to pay for extra yarn out of your own pocket.

[*The WEAVER'S WIFE, who has remained standing near the cashier's table, from time to time looking round appealingly, takes courage and once more comes forward.*

Weaver's Wife [to Cashier imploringly] — I don't know what's to come of me, sir, if you won't give me a little advance this time — O Lord, O Lord!

Pfeifer [calls across] — It's no good whining, or dragging the Lord's name into the matter. You're not so anxious about Him at other times. You look after your husband and see that he's not to be found so often lounging in the public-house. We can give no pay in advance. We have to account for every penny. It's not our money. People that are industrious, and understand their work, and do it in the fear of God, never need their pay in advance. So now you know.

Neumann — If a Biellau weaver got four times as much pay, he would squander it four times over and be in debt into the bargain.

Weaver's Wife [in a loud voice, as if appealing to the general sense of justice] — No one can't call me idle, but I'm not fit now for what I once was. I've twice had a miscarriage. And as to John, he's but a poor creature. He's been to the shepherd at Zerlau, but he couldn't do him no good, and — you can't do more than you've strength for. — We works as hard as ever we can. This many a week I've been at it till far on into the night. An' we'll keep our heads above water right enough if I can just get a bit of strength into me. But you must have pity on us, Mr. Pfeifer, sir. [*Eagerly, coaxingly.*] You'll please be so very kind as to let me have a few pence on the next job, sir?

Pfeifer [paying no attention] — Fiedler, one and twopence.

Weaver's Wife — Only a few pence, to buy bread with. We can't get no more credit. We've a lot of little ones.

Neumann [*half aside to the Apprentice, in a serio-comic tone*] — "Every year brings a child to the linen-weaver's wife, heigh-ho, heigh-ho, heigh."

Apprentice [*takes up the rhyme, half singing*] — "And the little brat it's blind the first weeks of its life, heigh-ho, heigh-ho, heigh."

Reimann [*not touching the money which the cashier has counted out to him*] — We've always got one and fourpence for the web.

Pfeifer [*calls across*] — If our terms don't suit you, Reimann, you have only to say so. There's no scarcity of weavers — especially of your sort. For full weight we give full pay.

Reimann — How anything can be wrong with the weight is past —

Pfeifer — You bring a piece of fustian with no faults in it, and there will be no fault in the pay.

Reimann — It's not possible that there's too many knots in this web.

Pfeifer [*examining*] — If you want to live well, then be sure you weave well.

Heiber [*has remained standing near PFEIFER, so as to seize on any favorable opportunity. He laughs at PFEIFER'S little witticism, then steps forward and again addresses him*] — I wanted to ask you, sir, if you would perhaps have the great kindness not to take my advance of sixpence off to-day's pay? My missus has been bedridden since February. She can't do a hand's turn for me, an' I've to pay a bobbin girl. And so —

Pfeifer [*takes a pinch of snuff*] — Heiber, do you think I have no one to attend to but you? The others must have their turn.

Reimann — As the warp was given me I took it home and fastened it to the beam. I can't bring back better yarn than I get.

Pfeifer — If you are not satisfied, you need come for no more. There are plenty ready to tramp the soles off their shoes to get it.

Neumann [*to REIMANN*] — Do you not want your money?

Reimann — I can't bring myself to take such pay.

Neumann [*paying no further attention to REIMANN*] — Heiber, one shilling. Deduct sixpence for pay in advance. Leaves sixpence.

Heiber [*goes up to the table, looks at the money, stands shaking his head as if unable to believe his eyes, then slowly takes it up*] — Well, I never ! — [*Sighing.*] Oh dear, oh dear !

Old Baumert [*looking into HEIBER'S face*] — Yes, Franz, that's so ! There's matter enough for sighing.

Heiber [*speaking with difficulty*] — I've a girl lying sick at home too, an' she needs a bottle of medicine.

Old Baumert — What's wrong with her ?

Heiber — Well, you see, she's always been a sickly bit of a thing. I don't know — I needn't mind tellin' you — she brought her trouble with her. It's in her blood, and it breaks out here, there, and everywhere.

Old Baumert — It's always the way. Let folks be poor, and one trouble comes to them on the top of another. There's no help for it and there's no end to it.

Heiber — What are you carryin' in that cloth, Father Baumert ?

Old Baumert — We haven't so much as a bite in the house, and so I've had the little dog killed. There's not much on him, for the poor beast was half starved. A nice little dog he was ! I couldn't kill him myself. I hadn't the heart to do it.

Pfeifer [*has inspected BECKER'S web ; calls*] — Becker, one and threepence.

Becker — That's what you might give to a beggar ; it's not pay.

Pfeifer — Every one who has been attended to must clear out. We haven't room to turn round in.

Becker [*to those standing near, without lowering his voice*] — It's a beggarly pittance, nothing else. A man works his treadle from early morning till late at night, an' when he has bent over his loom for days an' days, tired to death every evening, sick with the dust and the heat, he finds he's made a beggarly one and threepence !

Pfeifer — No impudence allowed here.

Becker — If you think I'll hold my tongue for your telling, you're much mistaken.

Pfeifer [*exclaims*] — We'll see about that ! [*Rushes to the glass door and calls into the office.*] Mr. Dreissiger, Mr. Dreissiger, will you be good enough to come here ?

Enter DREISSIGER. About forty, full bodied, asthmatic. Looks severe.

Dreissiger — What is it, Pfeifer?

Pfeifer [*spitefully*] — Becker says he won't be told to hold his tongue.

Dreissiger [*draws himself up, throws back his head, stares at BECKER; his nostrils tremble*] — Oh, indeed! — Becker. [*To PFEIFER.*] Is he the man? — [*The clerks nod.*]

Becker [*insolently*] — Yes, Mr. Dreissiger, yes! [*Pointing to himself.*] This is the man. [*Pointing to DREISSIGER.*] And that's a man too!

Dreissiger [*angrily*] — Fellow, how dare you?

Pfeifer — He's too well off. He'll go dancing on the ice once too often, though.

Becker [*recklessly*] — You shut up, you Jack-in-the-box. Your mother must have gone dancing once too often with Satan to have got such a devil for a son.

Dreissiger [*now in a violent passion, roars*] — Hold your tongue this moment, sir, or — [*He trembles and takes a few steps forward.*]

Becker [*holding his ground steadily*] — I'm not deaf. My hearing's quite good yet.

Dreissiger [*controls himself, asks in an apparently cool business tone*] — Was this fellow not one of the pack —?

Pfeifer — He's a Bielau weaver. When there's any mischief going, they are sure to be in it.

Dreissiger [*trembling*] — Well, I give you all warning: if the same thing happens again as last night — a troop of half-drunken cubs marching past my windows singing that low song —

Becker — Is it "Bloody Justice" you mean?

Dreissiger — You know well enough what I mean. I tell you that if I hear it again, I'll get hold of one of you, and — mind, I'm not joking — before the justice he shall go. And if I can find out who it was that made up that vile doggerel —

Becker — It's a beautiful song, that's what it is!

Dreissiger — Another word and I send for the police on the spot, without more ado. I'll make short work with you young fellows. I've got the better of very different men before now.

Becker — I believe you there. A real thoroughbred manufacturer will get the better of two or three hundred weavers in

the time it takes you to turn round—swallow them up, and not leave as much as a bone. He's got four stomachs, like a cow, and teeth like a wolf. That's nothing to him at all!

Dreissiger [*to his clerks*]—That man gets no more work from us.

Becker—It's all the same to me whether I starve at my loom or by the roadside.

Dreissiger—Out you go, then, this moment!

Becker [*determinedly*]—Not without my pay.

Dreissiger—How much is owing to the fellow, Neumann?

Neumann—One and threepence.

Dreissiger [*takes the money hurriedly out of the cashier's hand, and flings it on the table so that some of the coins roll off on to the floor*]—There you are, then; and now, out of my sight with you!

Becker—Not without my pay.

Dreissiger—Do you not see it lying there? If you don't take it and go—It's exactly twelve now—The dyers are coming out for their dinner—

Becker—I get my pay into my hand—here. [*Points with the fingers of his right hand at the palm of his left.*]

Dreissiger [*to the Apprentice*]—Pick up the money, Tilgner.

[*The APPRENTICE lifts the money and puts it into BECKER'S hand.*]

Becker—Everything in proper order. [*Deliberately takes an old purse out of his pocket and puts the money into it.*]

Dreissiger [*as BECKER still does not move away*]—Well? Do you want me to come and help you?

[*Signs of agitation are observable among the crowd of weavers. A long, loud sigh is heard, and then a fall. General interest is at once diverted to this new event.*]

Dreissiger—What's the matter there?

Chorus of Weavers and Women—“Some one's fainted.”—
“It's a little sickly boy.”—“Is it a fit, or what?”

Dreissiger—What do you say? Fainted? [*He goes nearer.*]

Old Weaver—There he lies, anyway.

[*They make room. A boy of about eight is seen lying on the floor as if dead.*]

Dreissiger—Does any one know the boy?

Old Weaver—He's not from our village.

Old Baumert—He's like one of Weaver Heinrich's boys.
[*Looks at him more closely.*] Yes, that's Heinrich's little Philip.

Dreissiger — Where do they live?

Old Baumert — Up near us in Kaschbach, sir. He goes round playin' music in the evenings, and all day he's at the loom. They've nine children an' a tenth a-coming.

Chorus of Weavers and Women — "They're terrible put to it." — "The rain comes through their roof." — "The woman hasn't two shirts among the nine."

Old Baumert [*taking the boy by the arm*] — Now then, lad, what's wrong with you? Wake up, lad.

Dreissiger — Some of you help me, and we'll get him up. It's disgraceful to send a sickly child this distance. Bring some water, Pfeifer.

Woman [*helping to lift the boy*] — Surely you're not going to die, lad!

Dreissiger — Brandy, Pfeifer, brandy will be better.

Becker [*forgotten by all, has stood looking on. With his hand on the door latch, he now calls loudly and tauntingly*] — Give him something to eat, an' he'll soon be all right. [*Goes out.*]

Dreissiger — That fellow will come to a bad end. — Take him under the arm, Neumann. Easy now, easy; we'll get him into my room. What?

Neumann — He said something, Mr. Dreissiger. His lips are moving.

Dreissiger — What — what is it, boy?

Boy [*whispers*] — I'm h—hungry!

Woman — I think he says —

Dreissiger — We'll find out. Don't stop. Let us get him into my room. He can lie on the sofa there. We'll hear what the doctor says.

[*DREISSIGER, NEUMANN, and the Woman lead the boy into the office. The weavers begin to behave like school children when their master has left the classroom. They stretch themselves, whisper, move from one foot to the other, and in the course of a few moments are conversing loudly.*]

Old Baumert — I believe as how Becker was right.

Chorus of Weavers and Women — "He did say something like that." — "It's nothing new here to fall down from hunger." — "God knows what's to come of them in winter if this cutting down of wages goes on." — "An' this year the potatoes aren't no good at all." — "Things'll get worse and worse till we're all done for together."

Old Baumert — The best thing a man could do would be to put a rope round his neck and hang himself on his own loom, like Weaver Nentwich. [*To another old weaver.*] Here, take a pinch. I was at Neurode yesterday. My brother in law, he works in the snuff factory there, and he give me a grain or two. Have you anything good in your handkercher?

Old Weaver — Only a little pearl barley. I was coming along behind Ulbrich the miller's cart, and there was a slit in one of the sacks. I can tell you we'll be glad of it.

Old Baumert — There's twenty-two mills in Peterswaldau, but of all they grind, there's never nothing comes our way.

Old Weaver — We must keep up heart. There's always something comes to help us on again.

Heiber — Yes, when we're hungry, we can pray to all the saints to help us, and if that don't fill our bellies we can put a pebble in our mouths and suck it. Eh, Baumert!

Reënter DREISSIGER, PFEIFER, and NEUMANN.

Dreissiger — It was nothing serious. The boy is all right again. [*Walks about excitedly, panting.*] But all the same it's a disgrace. The child's so weak that a puff of wind would blow him over. How people, how any parents can be so thoughtless is what passes my comprehension. Loading him with two heavy pieces of fustian to carry good six miles! No one would believe it that hadn't seen it. It simply means that I shall have to make a rule that no goods brought by children will be taken over. [*He walks up and down silently for a few moments.*] I sincerely trust such a thing will not occur again. — Who gets all the blame for it? Why, of course the manufacturer. It's entirely our fault. If some poor little fellow sticks in the snow in winter and goes to sleep, a special correspondent arrives post-haste, and in two days we have a blood-curdling story served up in all the papers. Is any blame laid on the father, the parents, that send such a child? — Not a bit of it. How should they be to blame? It's all the manufacturer's fault—he's made the scapegoat. They flatter the weaver, and give the manufacturer nothing but abuse—he's a cruel man, with a heart like a stone, a wicked fellow, at whose calves every cur of a journalist may take a bite. He lives on the fat of the land, and pays the poor weavers starvation wages. In the flow of his eloquence the writer forgets to mention that such a man has his cares too and his sleepless

nights; that he runs risks of which the workman never dreams; that he is often driven distracted by all the calculations he has to make, and all the different things he has to take into account; that he has to struggle for his very life against competition; and that no day passes without some annoyance or some loss. And think of the manufacturer's responsibilities, think of the numbers that depend on him, that look to him for their daily bread. No, no! none of you need wish yourselves in my shoes—you would soon have enough of it. [*After a moment's reflection.*] You all saw how that fellow, that scoundrel Becker, behaved. Now he'll go and spread about all sorts of tales of my hard-heartedness, of how my weavers are turned off for a mere trifle, without a moment's notice. Is that true? Am I so very unmerciful?

Chorus of Voices — No, sir!

Dreissiger — It doesn't seem to me that I am. And yet these ne'er-do-wells come round singing low songs about us manufacturers — prating about hunger, with enough in their pockets to pay for quarts of bad brandy. If they would like to know what want is, let them go and ask the linen weavers: they can tell something about it. But you here, you fustian weavers, have every reason to thank God that things are no worse than they are. And I put it to all the old industrious weavers present: Is a good workman able to gain a living in my employment, or is he not?

Many Voices — Yes, sir; he is, sir.

Dreissiger — There now! You see! Of course such a fellow as that Becker can't. I advise you to keep these young lads in check. If there's much more of this sort of thing, I'll shut up shop — give up the business altogether, and then you can shift for yourselves, get work where you like — perhaps Mr. Becker will provide it.

First Weaver's Wife [*has come close to DREISSIGER, obsequiously removes a little dust from his coat*] — You've been an' rubbed agin something, sir.

Dreissiger — Business is as bad as it can be just now, you know that yourselves. Instead of making money, I am losing it every day. If, in spite of this, I take care that my weavers are kept in work, I look for some little gratitude from them. I have thousands of pieces of cloth in stock, and don't know if I'll ever be able to sell them. Well now, I've heard how many weavers hereabouts are out of work, and — I'll leave Pfeifer to

give the particulars—but this much I'll tell you, just to show you my good will: I can't deal out charity all round; I'm not rich enough for that; but I can give the people who are out of work the chance of earning at any rate a little. It's a great business risk I run by doing it, but that's my affair. I say to myself: Better that a man should work for a bite of bread than that he should starve altogether. Am I not right?

Chorus of Voices—Yes, yes, sir.

Dreissiger—And therefore I am ready to give employment to two hundred more weavers. Pfeifer will tell you on what conditions. *[He turns to go.]*

First Weaver's Wife *[comes between him and the door, speaks hurriedly, eagerly, imploringly]*—Oh, if you please, sir, will you let me ask you if you'll be so good—I've been twice laid up for—

Dreissiger *[hastily]*—Speak to Pfeifer, good woman. I'm too late as it is. *[Passes on, leaving her standing.]*

Reimann *[stops him again. In an injured, complaining tone]*—I have a complaint to make, if you please, sir. Mr. Pfeifer refuses to—I've always got one and twopence for a web—

Dreissiger *[interrupts him]*—Mr. Pfeifer's my manager. There he is. Apply to him.

Heiber *[detaining DREISSIGER; hurriedly and confusedly]*—O sir, I wanted to ask if you would p'r'aps, if I might p'r'aps—if Mr. Pfeifer might—might—

Dreissiger—What is it you want?

Heiber—That advance pay I had last time, sir; I thought p'r'aps you would kindly—

Dreissiger—I have no idea what you are talking about.

Heiber—I'm awful hard up, sir, because—

Dreissiger—These are things Pfeifer must look into—I really have not the time. Arrange the matter with Pfeifer. *[He escapes into the office. The supplicants look helplessly at one another, sigh, and take their places again among the others.]*

Pfeifer *[resuming his task of inspection]*—Well, Annie, let us see what yours is like.

Old Baumert—How much are we to get for the web, then, Mr. Pfeifer?

Pfeifer—One shilling a web.

Old Baumert—Has it come to that!

[Excited whispering and murmuring among the weavers.]

ACT II.

A small room in the house of WILHELM ANSORGE, weaver and house-owner in the village of Kaschbach, in the Eulengebirge.

In this room, which does not measure six feet from the dilapidated wooden floor to the smoke-blackened rafters, sit four people. Two young girls, EMMA and BERTHA BAUMERT, are working at their looms; MOTHER BAUMERT, a decrepit old woman, sits on a stool beside the bed, with a winding-wheel in front of her; her idiot son AUGUST sits on a footstool, also winding. He is twenty, has a small body and head, and long, spider-like legs and arms.

Faint, rosy evening light makes its way through two small windows in the right wall, which have their broken panes pasted over with paper or stuffed with straw. It lights up the flaxen hair of the girls, which falls loose on their slender white necks and thin bare shoulders, and their coarse chemises. These, with a short petticoat of the roughest linen, form their whole attire. The warm glow falls on the old woman's face, neck, and breast—a face worn away to a skeleton, with shriveled skin and sunken eyes, red and watery with smoke, dust, and working by lamplight—a long goître neck, wrinkled and sinewy—a hollow breast covered with faded, ragged shawls.

Part of the right wall is also lighted up, with stove, stove-bench, bedstead, and one or two gaudily colored sacred prints. On the stove rail rugs are hanging to dry, and behind the stove is a collection of worthless lumber. On the bench stand some old pots and cooking utensils, and potato parings are laid out on it, on paper, to dry. Hanks of yarn and reels hang from the rafters; baskets of bobbins stand beside the looms. In the back wall there is a low door without fastening. Beside it a bundle of willow wands is set up against the wall, and beyond them lie some damaged quarter-bushel baskets.

The room is full of sound—the rhythmic thud of the looms, shaking floor and walls, the click and rattle of the shuttles passing back and forward, and the steady whirr of the winding-wheels, like the hum of gigantic bees.

Mother Baumert [in a querulous, feeble voice, as the girls stop weaving and bend over their webs]—Got to make knots again already, have you?

Emma [the elder of the two girls, about twenty-two, tying a broken thread]—It's the plagueyest web, this!

Bertha [fifteen]—Yes, it's real bad yarn they've given us this time.

Emma—What can have happened to father? He's been away since nine.

Mother Baumert — You may well ask. Where in the wide world can he be?

Bertha — Don't you worry yourself, mother.

Mother Baumert — I can't help it, Bertha lass.

[*EMMA begins to weave again.*]

Bertha — Stop a minute, Emma!

Emma — What is it?

Bertha — I thought I heard some one.

Emma — It'll be Ansorge coming home.

Enter FRITZ, a little, barefooted, ragged boy of four.

Fritz [*whimpering*] — I'm hungry, mother.

Emma — Wait, Fritz, wait a bit! Gran'father will be here very soon, an' he's bringin' bread along with him, an' coffee too.

Fritz — But I'm awful hungry, mother.

Emma — Be a good boy now, Fritz. Listen to what I'm tellin' you. He'll be here this minute. He's bringin' nice bread an' nice corn-coffee; an' when we stop working mother 'll take the tater peelin's and carry them to the farmer, and the farmer 'll give her a drop o' good skim milk for her little boy.

Fritz — Where's grandfather gone?

Emma — To the manufacturer, Fritz, with a web.

Fritz — To the manufacturer?

Emma — Yes, yes, Fritz, down to Dreissiger's at Peterswaldau.

Fritz — Is it there he gets the bread?

Emma — Yes; Dreissiger gives him money, and then he buys the bread.

Fritz — Does he give him a heap of money?

Emma [*impatiently*] — Oh, stop that chatter, boy.

[*She and BERTHA go on weaving for a time, and then both stop again.*]

Bertha — August, go and ask Ansorge if he'll give us a light.

[*AUGUST goes out, accompanied by FRITZ.*]

Mother Baumert [*overcome by her childish apprehension, whimpers*] — Emma! Bertha! where can father be?

Bertha — He'll have looked in to see Hauffen.

Mother Baumert [*crying*] — What if he's sittin' drinkin' in the public-house?

Emma — Don't cry, mother! You know well enugh father's not the man to do that.

Mother Baumert [half distracted by a multitude of gloomy forebodings] — What — what — what's to become of us if he doesn't come home? if he drinks the money, and brings us nothin' at all? There's not so much as a handful of salt in the house — not a bite o' bread, nor a bit o' wood for the fire.

Bertha — Wait a bit, mother! It's moonlight just now. We'll take August with us and go into the wood and get some sticks.

Mother Baumert — Yes, an' be caught by the forester.

ANSORGE, an old weaver of gigantic stature, who has to bend down to get into the room, puts his head and shoulders in at the door. Long, unkempt hair and beard.

Ansorge — What's wanted?

Bertha — Light, if you please.

Ansorge [in a muffled voice, as if speaking in a sick-room] — There's good daylight yet.

Mother Baumert — Are we to sit in the dark next?

Ansorge — I've to do the same myself. [Goes out.]

Bertha — It's easy to see that he's a miser.

Emma — Well, there's nothin' for it but to sit an' wait his pleasure.

Enter MRS. HEINRICH, a woman of thirty, enceinte; an expression of torturing anxiety and apprehension on her worn face.

Mrs. Heinrich — Good evenin' t'you all.

Mother Baumert — Well, Jenny, and what's your news?

Mrs. Heinrich [who limps] — I've got a piece o' glass into my foot.

Bertha — Come an' sit down, then, an' I'll see if I can get it out. [MRS. HEINRICH seats herself. BERTHA kneels down in front of her, and examines her foot.]

Mother Baumert — How are you all at home, Jenny?

Mrs. Heinrich [breaks out despairingly] — Things is in a terrible way with us! [She struggles in vain against a rush of tears; then weeps silently.]

Mother Baumert — The best thing as could happen to the likes of us, Jenny, would be if God had pity on us an' took us away out o' this weary world.

Mrs. Heinrich [no longer able to control herself, screams, still crying] — My children's starvin'. [Sobs and moans.] I'm at my wits' end. Let me work till I fall down — I'm more dead than alive — it's all no use. Am I able to fill nine hungry mouths? We got a bit o' bread last night, but it wasn't enough

even for the two smallest ones. Who was I to give it to, eh? They all cried: Me, me, mother! give it to me! — An' if it's like this while I'm still on my feet, what'll it be when I've to take to bed? Our few taters was washed away. We haven't a thing to put in our mouths.

Bertha [*has removed the bit of glass and washed the wound*] — We'll put a rag round it. Emma, see if you can find one.

Mother Baumert — We're no better off than you, Jenny.

Mrs. Heinrich — You have your girls, anyway. You've a husband as can work. Mine was taken with one of his fits last week again — so bad that I didn't know what to do with him, and was half out o' my mind with fright. And when he's had a turn like that, he can't stir out of bed under a week.

Mother Baumert — Mine's no better. His breathin's bad now as well as his back. An' there's not a farthin' nor a farthin's worth in the house. If he don't bring a few pence with him to-day, I don't know what we're to do.

Emma — It's the truth she's tellin' you, Jenny. We had to let father take the little dog with him to-day, to have him killed, that we might get a bite into our stomachs again!

Mrs. Heinrich — Have you not got as much as a handful of flour to spare?

Mother Baumert — And that we have not, Jenny. There's not as much as a grain of salt in the house.

Mrs. Heinrich — Oh, whatever am I to do! [*Rises, stands still, brooding.*] I don't know what'll be the end of this! It's more nor I can bear. [*Screams in rage and despair.*] I would be contented if it was nothin' but pigs' food! — But I can't go home again empty-handed — that I can't. God forgive me, I see no other way out of it. [*She limps quickly out.*]

Mother Baumert [*calls after her in a warning voice*] — Jenny, Jenny! don't you be doin' anything foolish, now!

Bertha — She'll do herself no harm, mother. You needn't be afraid.

Emma — That's the way she always goes on. [*Seats herself at the loom and weaves for a few seconds.*]

[*AUGUST enters, carrying a tallow candle, and lighting his father, OLD BAUMERT, who follows close behind him, staggering under a heavy bundle of yarn.*]

Mother Baumert — Oh, father, where have you been all this long time? Where have you been?

Old Baumert — Come now, mother, don't fall on a man like that. Give me time to get my breath first. An' look who I've brought with me.

[*MORITZ JAEGER comes stooping in at the low door. Reserve soldier, newly discharged. Middle height, rosy cheeked, military carriage. His cap on the side of his head, hussar fashion, whole clothes and shoes, a clean shirt without collar. Draws himself up and salutes.*

Jaeger [in a hearty voice] — Good evening, Auntie Baumert!

Mother Baumert — Well, well now! and to think you've got back! An' you've not forgotten us? Take a chair, then, lad.

Emma [wiping a wooden chair with her apron, and pushing it towards MORITZ] — An' so you've come to see what poor folks are like again, Moritz?

Jaeger — I say, Emma, is it true that you've got a boy nearly old enough to be a soldier? Where did you get hold of him, eh?

[*BERTHA, having taken the small supply of provisions which her father has brought, puts meat into a saucepan, and shoves it into the oven, while AUGUST lights the fire.*

Bertha — You knew Weaver Finger, didn't you?

Mother Baumert — We had him here in the house with us. He was ready enough to marry her; but he was too far gone in consumption; he was as good as a dead man. It didn't happen for want of warning from me. But do you think she would listen? Not she. Now he's dead an' forgotten long ago, an' she's left with the boy to provide for as best she can. But now tell us how you've been gettin' on, Moritz.

Old Baumert — You've only to look at him, mother, to know that. He's had luck. It'll be about as much as he can do to speak to the likes of us. He's got clothes like a prince, an' a silver watch, an' thirty shillings in his pocket into the bargain.

Jaeger [stretching himself consequentially, a knowing smile on his face] — I can't complain. I didn't get on at all badly in the regiment.

Old Baumert — He was the major's own servant. Just listen to him — he speaks like a gentleman.

Jaeger — I've got so accustomed to it that I can't help it.

Mother Baumert — Well, now, to think that such a good-for-nothing as you were should have come to be a rich man. For there wasn't nothing to be made of you. You would never sit still to wind' more than a hank of yarn at a time, that you

wouldn't. Off you went to your tomtit boxes an' your robin redbreast snares — they was all you cared about. Is it not the truth I'm telling?

Jaeger — Yes, yes, auntie, it's true enough. It wasn't only redbreasts. I went after swallows too.

Emma — Though we were always tellin' you that swallows were poison.

Jaeger — What did I care? — But how have you all been getting on, Auntie Baumert?

Mother Baumert — Oh, badly, lad, badly these last four years. I've had the rheumatics — just look at them hands. And it's more than likely as I've had a stroke o' some kind too, I'm that helpless. I can hardly move a limb, an' nobody knows the pains I suffers.

Old Baumert — She's in a bad way, she is. She'll not hold out long.

Bertha — We've to dress her in the mornin' an' undress her at night, an' to feed her like a baby.

Mother Baumert [*speaking in a complaining, tearful voice*] — Not a thing can I do for myself. It's far worse than bein' ill. For it's not only a burden to myself I am, but to every one else. Often and often do I pray to God to take me. For oh! mine's a weary life. I don't know — p'r'aps they think — but I'm one that's been a hard worker all my days. An' I've always been able to do my turn too; but now, all at once [*she vainly attempts to rise*], I can't do nothing. — I've a good husband an' good children, but to have to sit here and see them —! Look at the girls! There's hardly any blood left in them — faces the color of a sheet. But on they must work at these weary looms whether they earn enough to keep themselves or not. What sort o' life is it they lead? Their feet never off the treadle from year's end to year's end. An' with it all they can't scrape together as much as 'll buy them clothes that they can let themselves be seen in; never a step can they go to church, to hear a word of comfort. They're liker scarecrows than young girls of fifteen and twenty.

Bertha [*at the stove*] — It's beginnin' to smoke again!

Old Baumert — There now; look at that smoke. And we can't do nothin' for it. The whole stove's goin' to pieces. We must let it fall, and swallow the soot. We're coughing already, one worse than the other. We may cough till we choke, or till we cough our lungs up — nobody cares.

Jaeger — But this here is Ansorge's business; he must see to the stove.

Bertha — He'll see us out of the house first; he has plenty against us without that.

Mother Baumert — We've only been in his way this long time past.

Old Baumert — One word of a complaint an' out we go. He's had no rent from us this last half-year.

Mother Baumert — A well-off man like him needn't be so hard.

Old Baumert — He's no better off than we are, mother. He's hard put to it too, for all he holds his tongue about it.

Mother Baumert — He's got his house.

Old Baumert — What are you talking about, mother? Not one stone in the wall is the man's own.

Jaeger [*has seated himself, and taken a short pipe with gay tassels out of one coat-pocket, and a quart bottle of brandy out of another*] — Things can't go on like this. I'm dumfounded when I see the life the people live here. The very dogs in the towns live better.

Old Baumert [*eagerly*] — That's what I say! Eh? eh? You know it too! But if you say that here, they'll tell you that it's only bad times.

Enter ANSORGE, *an earthenware pan with soup in one hand, in the other a half-finished quarter-bushel basket.*

Ansorge — Glad to see you again, Moritz!

Jaeger — Thank you, Father Ansorge — same to you!

Ansorge [*shoving his pan into the oven*] — Why, lad, you look like a duke!

Old Baumert — Show him your watch, Moritz. An' he's got a new suit of clothes besides them he's on, an' thirty shillings in his purse.

Ansorge [*shaking his head.*] — Is that so? Well, well!

Emma [*puts the potato-parings into a bag*] — I must be off; I'll maybe get a drop o' skim milk for these. [*Goes out.*]

Jaeger [*the others hanging on his words*] — You know how you all used to be down on me. It was always: Wait, Moritz, till your soldiering time comes — you'll catch it then. But you see how well I've got on. At the end of the first half-year I had my good-conduct stripes. You've got to be willing — that's where the secret lies. I brushed the sergeant's boots; I groomed his horse; I fetched his beer. I was as sharp as a

needle. Always ready, accouterments clean and shining — first at stables, first at roll-call, first in the saddle. And when the bugle sounded to the assault — why, then, blood and thunder, and ride to the devil with you!! I was as keen as a pointer. Says I to myself: 'There's no help for it now, my boy, it's got to be done; and I set my mind to it and did it. Till at last the major said before the whole squadron: 'There's a hussar, now, that shows you what a hussar should be!

[*Silence. He lights his pipe.*

Ansorge [*shaking his head*] — Well, well, well! You had luck with you, Moritz. [*Sits down on the floor, with his willow twigs beside him, and continues mending the basket, which he holds between his legs.*]

Old Baumert — Let's hope you've brought some of it to us. — Are we to have a drop to drink your health in?

Jaeger — Of course you are, Father Baumert. And when this bottle's done, we'll send for more. [*He flings a coin on the table.*]

Ansorge [*open mouthed with amazement*] — Oh my! Oh my! What goings on, to be sure! Roast meat frizzlin' in the oven! A bottle o' brandy on the table! [*He drinks out of the bottle.*] Here's to you, Moritz! — Well, well, well!

[*The bottle circulates freely after this.*

Old Baumert — If we could any way have a bit o' meat on Sundays and holidays, instead of never seein' the sight of it from year's end to year's end! Now we'll have to wait till another poor little dog finds its way into the house like this one did four weeks gone by — an' that's not likely to happen soon again.

Ansorge — Have you killed the little dog?

Old Baumert — We had to do that or starve.

Ansorge — Well, well!

Mother Baumert — A nice, kind little beast he was, too!

Jaeger — Are you as keen as ever on roast dog hereabouts?

Old Baumert — My word, if we could only get enough of it!

Mother Baumert — A nice little bit o' meat like that does you a lot o' good.

Old Baumert — Have you lost the taste for it, Moritz? Stay with us a bit, and it'll soon come back to you.

Ansorge [*sniffing*] — Yes, yes! That will be a tasty bite — what a good smell it has!

Old Baumert [sniffing] — Splendid !

Ansorge — Come, then, Moritz, tell us your opinion, you that's been out and seen the world. Are things at all like improving for us weavers, eh?

Jaeger — They would need to.

Ansorge — We're in an awful state here. It's not livin' an' it's not dyin'. A man fights to the bitter end, but he's bound to be beat at last — to be left without a roof over his head, you may say without ground under his feet. As long as he can work at the loom he can earn some sort o' poor, miserable livin'. But it's many a day since I've been able to get that sort o' job. Now I tries to put a bite into my mouth with this here basket-makin'. I sits at it late into the night, and by the time I tumbles into bed I've earned three-halfpence. I put it to you if a man can live on that, when everything's so dear? Nine shillin' goes in one lump for house tax, three shillin' for land tax, nine shillin' for mortgage interest — that makes one pound one. I may reckon my year's earnin' at just double that money, and that leaves me twenty-one shillin' for a whole year's food, an' fire, an' clothes, an' shoes ; and I've got to keep up some sort of a place to live in. Is it any wonder if I'm behindhand with my interest payments?

Old Baumert — Some one would need to go to Berlin an' tell the King how hard put to it we are.

Jaeger — Little good that would do, Father Baumert. There's been plenty written about it in the newspapers. But the rich people, they can turn and twist things round — as cunning as the devil himself.

Old Baumert [shaking his head] — To think they've no more sense than that in Berlin !

Ansorge — And is it really true, Moritz? Is there no law to help us? If a man hasn't been able to scrape together enough to pay his mortgage interest, though he's worked the very skin off his hands, must his house be taken from him? The peasant that's lent the money on it, he wants his rights — what else can you look for from him? But what's to be the end of it all, I don't know. If I'm put out o' the house — [*In a voice choked by tears.*] I was born here, and here my father sat at his loom for more than forty year. Many was the time he said to mother: Mother, when I'm gone, the house'll still be here. I've worked hard for it. Every nail means a night's weaving, every plank a year's dry bread. A man would think that —

Jaeger — They're quite fit to take the last bite out of your mouth — that's what they are.

Ansorge — Well, well, well ! I would rather be carried out than have to walk out now in my old days. Who minds dyin' ? My father, he was glad to die. At the very end he got frightened, but I crept into bed beside him, an' he quieted down again. I was a lad of thirteen then. I was tired and fell asleep beside him — I knew no better — and when I woke he was quite cold.

Mother Baumert [*after a pause*] — Give Ansorge his soup out o' the oven, Bertha.

Bertha — Here, Father Ansorge, it'll do you good.

Ansorge [*eating and shedding tears*] — Well, well, well !

[*OLD BAUMERT has begun to eat meat out of the saucepan.*]

Mother Baumert — Father, father, can't you have patience an' let Bertha serve it up properly ?

Old Baumert [*chewing*] — It's two years now since I took the sacrament. I went straight after that an' sold my Sunday coat, an' we bought a good bit o' pork, an' since then never a mouthful of meat has passed my lips till to-night.

Jaeger — How should *we* need meat ? The manufacturers eat it for us. It's the fat of the land *they* live on. Whoever doesn't believe that has only to go down to Bielau and Peterswaldau. He'll see fine things there — palace upon palace, with towers and iron railings and plate-glass windows. Who do they all belong to ? Why, of course, the manufacturers ! No signs of bad times there ! Baked and boiled and fried — horses and carriages and governesses — they've money to pay for all that and goodness knows how much more. They're swelled out to bursting with pride and good living.

Ansorge — Things was different in my young days. Then the manufacturers let the weaver have his share. Now they keep everything to theirselves. An' would you like to know what's at the bottom of it all ? It's that the fine folks nowadays believes neither in God nor devil. What do they care about commandments or punishments ? And so they steal our last scrap o' bread, and leave us no chance of earnin' the barest living. For it's their fault. If our manufacturers was good men, there would be no bad times for us.

Jaeger — Listen, then, and I'll read you something that will please you. [*He takes one or two loose papers from his pocket.*] I say, August, run and fetch another quart from the public-house. Eh, boy, do you laugh all day long ?

Mother Baumert — No one knows why, but our August's always happy — grins an' laughs, come what may. Off with you then, quick! [*Exit AUGUST with the empty brandy bottle.*] You've got something good now, eh, father?

Old Baumert [*still chewing; spirits rising from the effect of food and drink*] — Moritz, you're the very man we want. You can read an' write. You understand the weaving trade, and you've a heart to feel for the poor weaver's sufferin's. You should stand up for us here.

Jaeger — I'd do that quick enough! There's nothing I'd like better than to give the manufacturers round here a bit of a fright — dogs that they are! I'm an easy-going fellow, but let me once get worked up into a real rage, and I'll take Dreisiger in the one hand and Dittrich in the other, and knock their heads together till the sparks fly out of their eyes. — If we could only arrange all to join together, we'd soon give the manufacturers a proper lesson — without help from King or Government — all we'd have to do would be to say, We want this and that, and we don't want the other thing. There would be a change of days then. As soon as they see that there's some pluck in us, they'll cave in. I know the rascals; they're a pack of cowardly hounds.

Mother Baumert — There's some truth in what you say. I'm not an ill-natured woman. I've always been the one to say as how there must be rich folks as well as poor. But when things comes to such a pass as this —

Jaeger — The devil may take them all, for what I care. It would be no more than they deserve.

[*OLD BAUMERT has quietly gone out.*]

Bertha — Where's father?

Mother Baumert — I don't know where he can have gone.

Bertha — Do you think he's not been able to stomach the meat, with not gettin' none for so long?

Mother Baumert [*in distress, crying*] — There now, there! He's not even able to keep it down when he's got it. Up it comes again, the only bite o' good food as he's tasted this many a day.

Reënter OLD BAUMERT, crying with rage.

Old Baumert — It's no good! I'm too far gone! Now that I've at last got hold of somethin' with a taste in it, my stomach won't keep it. [*He sits down on the bench by the stove, crying.*]

Jaeger [with a sudden violent ebullition of rage] — And yet there are people not far from here, justices they call themselves too, over-fed brutes, that have nothing to do all the year round but invent new ways of wasting their time. And these people say that the weavers would be quite well off if only they weren't so lazy.

Ansorge — The men as say that are no men at all, they're monsters.

Jaeger — Never mind, Father Ansorge; we're making the place hot for 'em. Becker and I have been and given Dreissiger a piece of our mind, and before we came away we sang him "Bloody Justice."

Ansorge — Good Lord! Is that the song?

Jaeger — Yes; I have it here.

Ansorge — They call it Dreissiger's song, don't they?

Jaeger — I'll read it to you.

Mother Baumert — Who wrote it?

Jaeger — That's what nobody knows. Now listen.

[*He reads, hesitating like a schoolboy, with incorrect accentuation, but unmistakably strong feeling. Despair, suffering, rage, hatred, thirst for revenge, all find utterance.*

The justice to us weavers dealt
Is bloody, cruel, and hateful;
Our life's one torture, long drawn out:
For Lynch law we'd be grateful.

Stretched on the rack day after day,
Hearts sick and bodies aching,
Our heavy sighs their witness bear
To spirit slowly breaking.

[*The words of the song make a strong impression on OLD BAUMERT. Deeply agitated, he struggles against the temptation to interrupt JAEGER. At last he can keep quiet no longer.*

Old Baumert [to his wife, half laughing, half crying, stammering] — Stretched on the rack day after day. Whoever wrote that, mother, wrote the truth. You can bear witness — eh, how does it go? "Our heavy sighs their witness bear" — what's the rest?

Jaeger — "To spirit slowly breaking."

Old Baumert — You know the way we sigh, mother, day and night, sleepin' and wakin'.

[ANSORGE *has stopped working, and cowers on the floor, strongly agitated.* MOTHER BAUMERT and BERTHA *wipe their eyes frequently during the course of the reading.*

Jaeger [continues to read] —

The Dreissigers true hangmen are,
 Servants no whit behind them;
 Masters and men with one accord
 Set on the poor to grind them.

You villains all, you brood of hell! —

Old Baumert [trembling with rage, stamping on the floor] —
 Yes, brood of hell!!!

Jaeger [reads] —

You fiends in fashion human,
 A curse will fall on all like you,
 Who prey on man and woman.

Ansorge — Yes, yes, a curse upon them!

Old Baumert [clenching his fist, threateningly] — You prey
 on man and woman.

Jaeger [reads] —

The suppliant knows he asks in vain,
 Vain every word that's spoken.
 "If not content, then go and starve —
 Our rules cannot be broken."

Old Baumert — What is it? "The suppliant knows he asks
 in vain"? Every word of it's true — every word — as true as
 the Bible. He knows he asks in vain.

Ansorge — Yes, yes! It's all no good.

Jaeger [reads] —

Then think of all our woe and want,
 O ye who hear this ditty!
 Our struggle vain for daily bread
 Hard hearts would move to pity.

But pity's what *you've* never known, —
 You'd take both skin and clothing,
 You cannibals, whose cruel deeds
 Fill all good men with loathing.

Old Baumert [jumps up, beside himself with excitement] —
 Both skin and clothing. It's true, it's all true! Here I stand,
 Robert Baumert, master-weaver, of Kaschbach. Who can bring

up anything against me? — I've been an honest, hard-working man all my life long, an' look at me now! What have I to show for it? Look at me! See what they've made of me! Stretched on the rack day after day. [*He holds out his arms.*] Feel that! Skin and bone! "You villains all, you brood of hell!!" [*He sinks down on a chair, weeping with rage and despair.*]

Ansorge [*flings his basket from him into a corner, rises, his whole body trembling with rage, gasps*] — And the time's come now for a change, I say. We'll stand it no longer! We'll stand it no longer! Come what may!

ACT III.

*The common room of the principal public-house in Peterswaldau. A large room with a rafted roof supported by a central wooden pillar, round which a table runs. In the back wall, a little to the right of the pillar, is the entrance door, through the opening of which the spacious lobby or outer room is seen, with barrels and brewing utensils. To the right of this door, in the corner, is the bar — a high wooden counter with receptacles for beer mugs, glasses, etc.; a cupboard with rows of brandy and liqueur bottles on the wall behind, and between counter and cupboard a narrow space for the bar-keeper. In front of the bar stands a table with a gay-colored cover, a pretty lamp hanging above it, and several cane chairs placed round it. Not far off, in the right wall, is a door with the inscription: **Bar Parlor**. Nearer the front on the same side an old eight-day clock stands ticking. At the back, to the left of the entrance door, is a table with bottles and glasses, and beyond this, in the corner, is the great stove. In the left wall there are three small windows. Below them runs a long bench; and in front of each stands a large oblong wooden table, with the end towards the wall. There are benches with backs along the sides of these tables, and at the end of each facing the window stands a wooden chair. The walls are washed blue and decorated with advertisements, colored prints, and oleographs, among the latter a portrait of Frederick William III.*

WELZEL, the publican, a good-natured giant, upwards of fifty, stands behind the counter, letting beer run from a barrel into a glass.

MRS. WELZEL is ironing by the stove. She is a handsome, tidily dressed woman in her thirty-fifth year.

ANNA WELZEL, a good-looking girl of seventeen, with a quantity of beautiful, fair, reddish hair, sits, nicely dressed, with her embroidery, at the table with the colored cover. She looks up from her work

for a moment and listens, as the sound of a funeral hymn sung by school children is heard in the distance.

WIEGAND, the joiner, in his working clothes, is sitting at the same table, with a glass of Bavarian beer before him. His face shows that he understands what the world requires of a man if he is to attain his ends — namely, craftiness, sharpness, and relentless determination.

A COMMERCIAL TRAVELER is seated at the pillar-table, vigorously masticating a beefsteak. He is of middle height, stout and thriving-looking, inclined to jocosity, lively and impudent. He is dressed in the fashion of the day, and his portmanteau, pattern-case, umbrella, overcoat, and traveling rug lie on chairs beside him.

Welzel [*carrying a glass of beer to the Traveler, but addressing WIEGAND*] — The devil's loose in Peterswaldau to-day.

Wiegand [*in a sharp, shrill voice*] — That's because it's delivery day at Dreissiger's.

Mrs. Welzel — But they don't generally make such an awful row.

Wiegand — It's maybe because of the two hundred new weavers that he's going to take on.

Mrs. Welzel [*at her ironing*] — Yes, yes, that'll be it. If he wants two hundred, six hundred's sure to have come. There's no lack of *them*.

Wiegand — You may well say that. There's no fear of their dying out, let them be ever so badly off. They bring more children into the world than we know what to do with. [*The strains of the funeral hymn are suddenly heard more distinctly.*] There's a funeral to-day, too. Weaver Nentwich is dead, as no doubt you know.

Welzel — He's been long enough about it. He's been goin' about like a livin' ghost this many a long day.

Wiegand — You never saw such a little coffin, Welzel; it was the tiniest, miserablest little thing I ever glued together. And what a corpse! It didn't weigh ninety pounds.

Traveler [*his mouth full*] — What I don't understand's this. — Take up whatever paper you like, and you'll find the most heartrending accounts of the destitution among the weavers. You get the impression that three-quarters of the people in this neighborhood are starving. Then you come and see a funeral like what's going on just now. I met it as I came into the village. Brass band, schoolmaster, school children, pastor, and such a procession behind them that you would think it was the Emperor of China that was getting buried. If the people have

money to spend on this sort of thing, well — ! [*He takes a drink of beer ; puts down the glass ; suddenly and jocosely.*] What do you say to it, miss? Don't you agree with me? [*ANNA gives an embarrassed laugh, and goes on working busily.*] Now, I'll take a bet that these are slippers for papa.

Welzel — You're wrong, then ; I wouldn't put such things on my feet.

Traveler — You don't say so ! Now, I would give half of what I'm worth if these slippers were for me.

Mrs. Welzel — Oh, you don't know nothing about such things.

Wiegand [*has coughed once or twice, moved his chair, and prepared himself to speak*] — You were saying, sir, that you wondered to see such a funeral as this. I tell you, and *Mrs. Welzel* here will bear me out, that it's quite a small funeral.

Traveler — But, my good man, — what a monstrous lot of money it must cost ! Where does that all come from?

Wiegand — If you'll excuse me for saying so, sir, there's a deal of foolishness among the poorer working people hereabouts. They have a kind of inordinate idea, if I may say so, of the respect an' duty an' honor they're bound to show to such as are taken from their midst. And when it comes to be a case of parents, then there's no bounds whatever to their superstitiousness. The children and the nearest family scrapes together every farthing they can call their own, an' what's still wanting, that they borrow from some rich man. They run themselves into debt over head and ears ; they're owing money to the pastor, to the sexton, and to all concerned. Then there's the victuals an' the drink, an' such like. No, sir, I'm far from speaking against dutifulness to parents ; but it's too much when it goes the length of the mourners having to bear the weight of it for the rest of their lives.

Traveler — But surely the pastor might reason them out of such foolishness.

Wiegand — Begging your pardon, sir, but I must mention that every little place hereabouts has its church an' its respected pastor to support. These honorable gentlemen has their advantages from big funerals. The larger the attendance is, the larger the offertory is bound to be. Whoever knows the circumstances connected with the working classes here, sir, will assure you that the pastors are strong against quiet funerals. .

Enter HORNIG, the rag dealer, a little bandy-legged old man, with a strap round his chest.

Hornig — Good mornin', ladies and gentlemen! A glass of schnapps, if you please, Mr. Welzel. Has the young mistress anything for me to-day? I've got beautiful ribbons in my cart, Miss Anna, an' tapes an' garters, an' the very best of pins an' hairpins, an' hooks an' eyes. An' all in exchange for a few rags. [*He changes his voice.*] An' out of them rags fine white paper's to be made, for your sweetheart to write you a letter on.

Anna — Thank you, but I've nothing to do with sweethearts.

Mrs. Welzel [*putting a bolt into her iron*] — No, she's not that kind. She'll not hear of marrying.

Traveler [*jumps up, affecting delighted surprise, goes forward to ANNA'S table, and holds out his hand to her across it*] — That's right, miss. You and I think alike in this matter. Give me your hand on it. We'll both remain single.

Anna [*blushing scarlet, gives him her hand*] — But you are married already!

Traveler — Not a bit of it. I only pretend to be. You think so because I wear a ring. I only have it on my finger to protect my charms against shameless attacks. I'm not afraid of you, though. [*He puts the ring into his pocket.*] But tell me truly, miss, are you quite determined never, never, never to marry?

Anna [*shakes her head*] — Oh, get along with you!

Mrs. Welzel — You may trust her to remain single unless something very extra good turns up.

Traveler — And why should it not? I know of a rich Silesian proprietor who married his mother's lady's maid. And there's Dreissiger, the rich manufacturer, his wife is an innkeeper's daughter too, and not half so pretty as you, miss, though she rides in her carriage now, with servants in livery. And why not? [*He marches about, stretching himself, and stamping his feet.*] Let me have a cup of coffee, please.

Enter ANSORGE and OLD BAUMERT, each with a bundle. They seat themselves meekly and silently beside HORNIG, at the front table to the left.

Welzel — How are you, Father Ansgorge? Glad to see you once again.

Hornig — Yes, it's not often as you crawl down from that smoky old nest.

Ansorge [*visibly embarrassed, mumbles*] — I've been fetchin' myself a web again.

Baumert — He's goin' to work at a shilling the web.

Ansorge — I wouldn't have done it, but there's no more to be made now by basket-weavin'.

Wiegand — It's always better than nothing. He does it only to give you employment. I know Dreissiger very well. When I was up there taking out his double windows last week we were talking about it, him and me. It's out of pity that he does it.

Ansorge — Well, well, well! That may be so.

Welzel [*setting a glass of schnapps on the table before each of the weavers*] — Here you are, then. I say, *Ansorge*, how long is it since you had a shave? The gentleman over there would like to know.

Traveler [*calls across*] — Now, Mr. *Welzel*, you know I didn't say that. I was only struck by the venerable appearance of the master-weaver. It isn't often one sees such a gigantic figure.

Ansorge [*scratching his head, embarrassed*] — Well, well!

Traveler — Such specimens of primitive strength are rare nowadays. We're all rubbed smooth by civilization — but I can still take pleasure in nature untampered with. These bushy eyebrows! That tangled length of beard!

Hornig — Let me tell you, sir, that these people haven't the money to pay a barber, and as to a razor for themselves, that's altogether beyond them. What grows, grows. They haven't nothing to throw away on their outsides.

Traveler — My good friend, you surely don't imagine that I would — [*Aside to Welzel.*] Do you think I might offer the hairy one a glass of beer?

Welzel — No, no; you mustn't do that. He wouldn't take it. He's got some queer ideas in that head of his.

Traveler — All right, then, I won't. With your permission, miss. [*He seats himself at ANNA'S table.*] I declare, miss, that I've not been able to take my eyes off your hair since I came in — such glossy softness, such a splendid quantity! [*Estatically kisses his finger-tips.*] And what a color! — like ripe wheat. Come to Berlin with that hair and you'll create no end of a sensation. On my honor, with hair like that you may go to Court. [*Leans back looking at it.*] Glorious, simply glorious!

Wiegand — They've given her a name because of it.

Traveler — And what may that be?

Hornig — The chestnut filly, isn't it?

Welzel — Come now, we've had enough o' this. I'm not goin' to have the girl's head turned altogether. She's had a-plenty of silly notions put into it already. She'll hear of nothing under a Count to-day, and to-morrow it'll be a Prince.

Mrs. Welzel — You let her alone, father. There's no harm in wantin' to rise in the world. It's as well that people don't all think as you do, or nobody would get on at all. If Dreissiger's grandfather had been of your way of thinkin', they would be poor weavers still. And now they're rollin' in wealth. An' look at old Tromtra. He was nothing but a weaver, too, and now he owns twelve estates, an' he's been made a nobleman into the bargain.

Wiegand — Yes, Welzel, you must look at the thing fairly. Your wife's in the right this time. I can answer for that. I'd never be where I am, with seven workmen under me, if I had thought like you.

Hornig — Yes, you understand the way to get on; that your worst enemy must allow. Before the weaver has taken to bed, you're gettin' his coffin ready.

Wiegand — A man must attend to his business if he's to make anything of it.

Hornig — No fear of you for that. You know before the doctor when death's on the way to knock at a weaver's door.

Wiegand [*attempting to laugh, suddenly furious*] — And you know better than the police where the thieves are among the weavers, that keep back two or three bobbins full every week. It's rags you ask for, but you don't say No, if there's a little yarn among them.

Hornig — An' your corn grows in the churchyard. The more that are bedded on the sawdust, the better for you. When you see the rows of little children's graves, you pats yourself on the belly, and says you: This has been a good year; the little brats have fallen like cockchafers off the trees. I can allow myself a quart extra in the week again.

Wiegand — And supposing this is all true, it still doesn't make me a receiver of stolen goods.

Hornig — No; perhaps the worst you do is to send in an account twice to the rich fustian manufacturers, or to help yourself to a plank or two at Dreissiger's when there's building goin' on and the moon happens not to be shinin'.

Wiegand [*turning his back*] — Talk to any one you like, but not to me. [*Then suddenly.*] *Hornig* the liar!

Hornig — *Wiegand* the coffin-jobber!

Wiegand [*to the rest of the company*] — He knows charms for bewitching cattle.

Hornig — If you don't look out, I'll try one of 'em on you.

[*WIEGAND turns pale.*]

Mrs. Welzel [*had gone out; now returns with the Traveler's coffee; in the act of putting it on the table*] — Perhaps you would rather have it in the parlor, sir?

Traveler — Most certainly not! [*With a languishing look at ANNA.*] I could sit here till I die.

Enter a Young Forester and a Peasant, the latter carrying a whip. They wish the others "Good Morning," and remain standing at the counter.

Peasant — Two brandies, if you please.

Welzel — Good morning to you, gentlemen.

[*He pours out their beverage; the two touch glasses, take a mouthful, and then set the glasses down on the counter.*]

Traveler [*to Forester*] — Come far this morning, sir?

Forester — From Steinseiffersdorf — that's a good step.

Two old Weavers enter, and seat themselves beside ANSORGE, BAUMERT, and HORNIG.

Traveler — Excuse me asking, but are you in Count Hochheim's service?

Forester — No. I'm in Count Keil's.

Traveler — Yes, yes, of course — that was what I meant. One gets confused here among all the Counts and Barons and other gentlemen. It would take a giant's memory to remember them all. Why do you carry an ax, if I may ask?

Forester — I've just taken this one from a man who was stealing wood.

Old Baumert — Yes, their lordships are mighty strict with us about a few sticks for the fire.

Traveler — You must allow that if every one were to help himself to what he wanted —

Old Baumert — By your leave, sir, but there's a difference made here as elsewhere between the big an' the little thieves.

There's some here as deals in stolen wood wholesale, and grows rich on it. But if a poor weaver —

First Old Weaver [interrupts BAUMERT] — We're forbid to take a single branch; but their lordships, they take the very skin off of us — we've assurance money to pay, an' spinning money, an' charges in kind — we must go here an' go there, an' do so an' so much field work, all willy-nilly.

Ansorge — That's just how it is — what the manufacturer leaves us, their lordships takes from us.

Second Old Weaver [has taken a seat at the next table] — I've said it to his lordship himself. By your leave, my lord, says I, it's not possible for me to work on the estate so many days this year. For why — my own bit o' ground, my lord, it's been next to carried away by the rains. I've to work both night and day if I'm to live at all. For oh, what a flood that was — ! There I stood an' wrung my hands, an' watched the good soil come pourin' down the hill, into the very house ! An' all that dear, fine seed ! — I could do nothing but roar an' cry until I couldn't see out o' my eyes for a week. And then I had to start an' wheel eighty heavy barrow-loads of earth up that hill, till my back was all but broken.

Peasant [roughly] — You weavers here make such an awful outcry. As if we hadn't all to put up with what Heaven sends us. An' if you *are* badly off just now, whose fault is it but your own? What did you do when trade was good? Drank an' squandered all you made. If you had saved a bit then, you'd have it to fall back on now when times is bad, and not need to be goin' stealin' yarn and wood.

First Young Weaver [standing with several comrades in the lobby or outer room, calls in at the door] — What's a peasant but a peasant, though he lies in bed till nine?

First Old Weaver — The peasant an' the Count, it's the same story with 'em both. Says the peasant when a weaver wants a house: I'll give you a little bit of a hole to live in, an' you'll pay me so much rent in money, an' the rest of it you'll make up by helpin' me to get in my hay an' my corn — an' if that doesn't please you, why, then you may go elsewhere. He tries another, and the second he says the same as the first.

Baumert [angrily] — The weaver's like a bone that every dog takes a gnaw at.

Peasant [furious] — You starving curs, you're no good for anything. 'Can you yoke a plow? Can you draw a straight

furrow or throw a bundle of sheaves on to a cart? You're fit for nothing but to idle about an' go after the women. A pack of scoundrelly, ne'er-do-wells!

[*He has paid and now goes out. The Forester follows, laughing. WELZEL, the joiner, and MRS. WELZEL laugh aloud; the Traveler laughs to himself. Then there is a moment's silence.*]

Hornig — A peasant like that's as stupid as his own ox. As if I didn't know all about the distress in the villages round here. Sad sights I've seen! Four and five lyin' naked on one sack of straw.

Traveler [*in a mildly remonstrative tone*] — Allow me to remark, my good man, that there's a great difference of opinion as to the amount of distress here in the Eulengebirge. If you can read —

Hornig — I can read straight off, as well as you. An' I know what I've seen with my own eyes. It would be queer if a man that's traveled the country with a pack on his back these forty years an' more didn't know something about it. There was Fullern, now. You saw the children scraping about among the dung-heaps with the peasant's geese. The people up there died naked, on the bare stone floors. In their sore need they ate the stinking weavers' glue. Hunger carried them off by the hundred.

Traveler — You must be aware, since you are able to read, that strict investigation has been made by the Government, and that —

Hornig — Yes, yes, we all know what that means. They send a gentleman that knows all about it already better nor if he had seen it, an' he goes about a bit in the village, at the lower end, where the best houses are. He doesn't want to dirty his shining boots. Thinks he to himself: All the rest'll be the same as this. An' so he steps into his carriage an' drives away home again, an' then writes to Berlin that there's no distress in the place at all. If he had but taken the trouble to go higher up into a village like that, to where the stream comes in, or across the stream on to the narrow side — or, better still, if he'd gone up to the little out-o'-the-way hovels on the hill above, some of 'em that black an' tumble-down as it would be the waste of a good match to set fire to 'em — it's another kind of report he'd have sent to Berlin. They should have come to me, these government gentlemen that wouldn't believe there was no dis-

tress here. I would have shown them something. I'd have opened their eyes for 'em in some of these starvation holes.

[*The strains of the Weavers' Song are heard, sung outside.*

Welzel — There they are, roaring at that devil's song again.

Wiegand — They're turning the whole place upside down.

Mrs. Welzel — You'd think there was something in the air.

[JAEGER and BECKER arm in arm, at the head of a troop of young weavers, march noisily through the outer room and enter the bar.

Jaeger — Halt! To your places!

[*The new arrivals sit down at the various tables, and begin to talk to other weavers already seated there.*

Hornig [calls out to BECKER] — What's up now, Becker, that you've got together a crowd like this?

Becker [significantly] — Who knows but something may be going to happen? Eh, Moritz?

Hornig — Come, come, lads. Don't you be a-gettin' of yourselves into mischief.

Becker — Blood's flowed already. Would you like to see it?

[*He pulls up his sleeve, and shows bleeding tattoo-marks on the upper part of his arm. Many of the other young weavers do the same.*

Becker — We've been at Father Schmidt's, gettin' ourselves vaccinated.

Hornig — Now the thing's explained. Little wonder there's such an uproar in the place, with a band of young rascallions like you paradin' round.

Jaeger [consequently, in a loud voice] — You may bring two quarts at once, Welzel! I pay. Perhaps you think I haven't got the needful. You're wrong, then. If we wanted we could sit an' drink your best brandy an' swill coffee till to-morrow morning with any bagman in the land.

[*Laughter among the young weavers.*

Traveler [affecting comic surprise] — Is the young gentleman kind enough to take notice of me?

[*Host, hostess, and their daughter, WIEGAND, and the Traveler all laugh.*

Jaeger — If the cap fits, wear it.

Traveler — Your affairs seem to be in a thriving condition, young man, if I may be allowed to say so.

Jaeger — I can't complain. I'm a traveler in made-up

goods. I go shares with the manufacturers. The nearer starvation the weaver is, the better I fare. His want butters my bread.

Becker — Well done, Moritz! You gave it him that time. Here's to you!

[*WELZEL has brought the corn-brandy. On his way back to the counter he stops, turns round slowly, and stands, an embodiment of phlegmatic strength, facing the weavers.*

Welzel [*calmly but emphatically*] — You let the gentleman alone. He's done you no harm.

Young Weavers — And we're doing him no harm.

[*MRS. WELZEL has exchanged a few words with the Traveler. She takes the cup with the remains of his coffee and carries it into the parlor. The Traveler follows her amidst the laughter of the weavers.*

Young Weavers [*singing*] — "The Dreissigers the hangmen are, Servants no whit behind them."

Welzel — Hush-sh! Sing that song anywhere else you like, but not in my house.

First Old Weaver — He's quite right. Stop that singin', lads.

Becker [*roars*] — But we must march past Dreissiger's, boys, and let him hear it once more.

Wiegand — You'd better take care — you may march once too often!

[*Laughter and cries of Ho, ho!*

[*WITTIG has entered; a gray-haired old smith, bare-headed, with leather apron and wooden shoes, sooty from the smithy. He is standing at the counter waiting for his schnapps.*

Young Weavers — Wittig, Wittig!

Wittig — Here he is. What do you want with him?

Young Weavers — "It's Wittig!" — "Wittig, Wittig!" — "Come here, Wittig." — "Sit beside us, Wittig."

Wittig — Do you think I would sit beside a set of rascals like you?

Jaeger — Come and take a glass with us.

Wittig — Keep your brandy to yourselves. I pay for my own drink. [*Takes his glass and sits down beside BAUMERT and ANSORGE. Clapping the latter on the stomach.*] What's the weavers' food so nice? Sauerkraut and roasted lice!

Old Baumert [*excitedly*] — But what would you say now if they'd made up their minds as how they would put up with it no longer?

Wittig [with pretended astonishment, staring open-mouthed at the old weaver] — Heinerle! you don't mean to tell me that that's you! [*Laughs immoderately.*] O Lord, O Lord! I could laugh myself to death. Old Baumert risin' in rebellion! We'll have the tailors at it next, and then there'll be a rebellion among the baa-lambs, and the rats and the mice. Damn it all, but we'll see some sport. [*He nearly splits with laughter.*

Old Baumert — You needn't go on like that, Wittig. I'm the same man I've always been. I still say 'twould be better if things could be put right peaceably.

Wittig — Peaceably! How could it be done peaceably? Did they do it peaceably in France? Did Robespier tickle the rich men's palms? No! It was: Away with them, every one! To the gilyoteen with them! Allongs onfong! You've got your work before you. The geese'll not fly ready roasted into your mouths.

Old Baumert — If I could make even half a livin' —

First Old Weaver — The water's up to our chins now, Wittig.

Second Old Weaver — We're afraid to go home. It's all the same whether we works or whether we lies abed; it's starvation both ways.

First Old Weaver — A man's like to go mad at home.

Old Ansorge — It's that length with me now that I don't care how things go.

Old Weavers [with increasing excitement] — "We've no peace anywhere." — "We've no spirit left to work." — "Up with us in Steenkunzendorf you can see a weaver sittin' by the stream washin' hisself the whole day long, naked as God made him. It's driven him clean out of his mind."

Third Old Weaver [moved by the spirit, stands up and begins to "speak with tongues," stretching out his hand threateningly] — Judgment is at hand! Have no dealings with the rich and the great! Judgment is at hand! The Lord God of Sabaoth —

[*Some of the weavers laugh. He is pulled down to his seat.*

Welzel — That's a chap that can't stand a single glass — he gets wild at once.

Third Old Weaver [jumps up again] — But they — they believe not in God, not in hell, not in heaven. They mock at religion —

First Old Weaver — Come, come now, that's enough!

Becker — You let him do his little bit o' preaching. There's many a one would be the better for taking it to heart.

Voices [in excited confusion] — “Let him alone!” — “Let him speak!”

Third Old Weaver [raising his voice] — But hell is opened, saith the Lord; its jaws are gaping wide, to swallow up all those that oppress the afflicted and pervert judgment in the cause of the poor. *[Wild excitement.]*

Third Old Weaver [suddenly declaiming schoolboy fashion] —

When one has thought upon it well,
It's still more difficult to tell
Why they the linen-weaver's work despise.

Becker — But we're fustian weavers, man. *[Laughter.]*

Hornig — The linen weavers is ever so much worse off than you. They're wandering about among the hills like ghosts. You people here have still got the pluck left in you to kick up a row.

Wittig — Do you suppose the worst's over here? It won't be long till the manufacturers drain away that little bit of strength they still have left in their bodies.

Becker — You know what he said: It will come to the weavers working for a bite of bread. *[Uproar.]*

Several Old and Young Weavers — Who said that?

Becker — Dreissiger said it.

A Young Weaver — The damned rascal should be hung up by the heels.

Jaeger — Look here, Wittig. You've always jawed such a lot about the French Revolution, and a good deal too about your own doings. A time may be coming, and that before long, when every one will have a chance to show whether he's a braggart or a true man.

Wittig [flaring up angrily] — Say another word if you dare! Have you heard the whistle of bullets? Have you done outpost duty in an enemy's country?

Jaeger — You needn't get angry about it. We're comrades. I meant no harm.

Wittig — None of your comradeship for me, you impudent young fool.

Enter KUTCHE, the policeman.

Several Voices — Hush — sh! Police!

[This calling goes on for some time, till at last there is complete silence, amidst which KUTCHE takes his place at the central pillar-table.]

Kutsche — A small brandy, please. [*Again complete silence.*

Wittig — I suppose you've come to see if we're all behaving ourselves, *Kutsche*?

Kutsche [*paying no attention to WITTIG*] — Good morning, Mr. Wiegand.

Wiegand [*still in the corner in front of the counter*] — Good morning t'you, sir.

Kutsche — How's trade?

Wiegand — Thank you, much as usual.

Becker — The chief constable's sent him to see if we're spoiling our stomachs on these big wages we're getting.

[*Laughter.*

Jaeger — I say, *Welzel*, you will tell him how we've been feasting on roast pork an' sauce an' dumplings and sauerkraut, and now we're sitting at our champagne wine. [*Laughter.*

Welzel — The world's upside down with them to-day.

Kutsche — An' even if you had the champagne wine and the roast meat, you wouldn't be satisfied. I've to get on without champagne wine as well as you.

Becker [*referring to KUTSCHE'S nose*] — He waters his beet-root with brandy and gin. An' it thrives upon it too.

[*Laughter.*

Wittig — A p'liceman like that has a hard life. Now it's a starving beggar boy he has to lock up, then it's a pretty weaver girl he has to lead astray; then he has to get roarin' drunk an' beat his wife till she goes screamin' to the neighbors for help; and there's the ridin' about on horseback and the lyin' in bed till nine — nay, faith, but it's no easy job!

Kutsche — Jaw away; you'll jaw a rope round your neck in time. It's long been known what sort of a fellow you are. The magistrates know all about that dangerous tongue of yours. I know who'll drink wife and child into the poorhouse an' himself into jail before long, who it is that'll go on agitatin' and agitatin' till he brings down judgment on himself and all concerned.

Wittig [*laughs bitterly*] — It's true enough — no one knows what'll be the end of it. You may be right yet. [*Bursts out in fury.*] But if it does come to that, I know who I've got to thank for it, who it is that's blabbed to the manufacturers an' all the gentlemen round, an' blackened my character to that extent that they never give me a hand's turn of work to do — an' set the peasants an' the millers against me, so that I'm often

a whole week without a horse to shoe or a wheel to put a tire on. I know who's done it. I once pulled the damned brute off his horse, because he was givin' a little stupid boy the most awful flogging for stealin' a few unripe pears. But I tell you this, Kutsche, and you know me — if you get me put into prison, you may make your own will. If I hear as much as a whisper of it, I'll take the first thing as comes handy, whether it's a horseshoe or a hammer, a wheel-spoke or a pail; I'll get hold of you if I've to drag you out of bed from beside your wife, and I'll beat in your brains, as sure as my name's Wittig.

[*He has jumped up and is going to rush at KUTCHE.*

Old and Young Weavers [holding him back] — Wittig, Wittig! Don't lose your head!

Kutsche [has risen involuntarily, his face pale. He backs towards the door while speaking. The nearer the door the higher his courage rises. He speaks the last words on the threshold, and then instantly disappears] — What are you goin' on at me about? I didn't meddle with you. I came to say something to the weavers. My business is with them an' not with you, and I've done nothing to you. But I've this to say to you weavers: the Superintendent of Police herewith forbids the singing of that song — Dreissiger's song or whatever it is you call it. And if the yelling of it on the street isn't stopped at once, he'll provide you with plenty of time and leisure for goin' on with it in jail. You may sing there, on bread and water, to your hearts' content. [*Goes out.*

Wittig [roars after him] — He's no right to forbid it — not if we were to roar till the windows shook an' they could hear us at Reichenbach — not if we sang till the manufacturers' houses tumbled about their ears an' all the Superintendent's helmets danced on the top of their heads. It's nobody's business but our own.

[*BECKER has in the meantime got up, made a signal for singing, and now leads off, the others joining in.*

The justice to us weavers dealt
Is bloody, cruel, and hateful;
Our life's one torture, long drawn out;
For Lynch law we'd be grateful.

[*WELZEL attempts to quiet them, but they pay no attention to him. WIEGAND puts his hands to his ears and rushes off. During the singing of the next verse the weavers rise and form into*

procession behind BECKER and WITTIG, who have given pantomimic signs for a general break-up.

Stretched on the rack day after day,
Hearts sick and bodies aching,
Our heavy sighs their witness bear
To spirit slowly breaking.

[*Most of the weavers sing the following verse out on the street, only a few young fellows, who are paying, being still in the bar. At the conclusion of the verse no one is left in the room except WELZEL and his wife and daughter, HORNIG and OLD BAUMERT.*

You villains all, you brood of hell,
You fiends in fashion human,
A curse will fall on all like you
Who prey on man and woman.

Welzel [*phlegmatically collecting the glasses*] — Their backs are up to-day, and no mistake.

Hornig [*to OLD BAUMERT, who is preparing to go*] — What in the name of Heaven are they up to, Baumert?

Baumert — They're goin' to Dreissiger's to make him add something on to the pay.

Welzel — And are you joining in these foolish ongoing's?

Old Baumert — I've no choice, *Welzel*. The young men may an' the old men must. [*Goes out rather shamefacedly.*

Hornig — It'll not surprise me if this ends badly.

Welzel — To think that even old fellows like him are goin' right off their heads!

Hornig — We all set our hearts on something!

ACT IV.

Peterswaldau. — *Private room of DREISSIGER, the fustian manufacturer — luxuriously furnished in the chilly taste of the first half of this century. Ceiling, doors, and stove are white, and the wall paper, with its small, straight-lined floral pattern, is dull and cold in tone. The furniture is mahogany, richly carved, and upholstered in red. On the right, between two windows with crimson damask curtains, stands the writing-table, a high bureau with falling flap. Directly opposite to this is the sofa, with the strong-box beside it; in front of the sofa a table, with chairs and easy-chairs arranged about it. Against*

the back wall is a gun-cupboard. All three walls are decorated with bad pictures in gilt frames. Above the sofa is a mirror with a heavily gilt rococo frame. On the left an ordinary door leads into the hall. An open folding door at the back shows the drawing-room over furnished in the same style of comfortless splendor. Two ladies, MRS. DREISSIGER and MRS. KITTELHAUS, the Pastor's wife, are seen in the drawing-room, looking at pictures. PASTOR KITTELHAUS is there too, engaged in conversation with WEINHOLD, the tutor, a theological graduate.

Kittelhaus [a kindly little elderly man, enters the front room, smoking and talking to the tutor, who is also smoking; he looks round and shakes his head in surprise at finding the room empty] — You are young, Mr. Weinhold, which explains everything. At your age we old fellows held — well, I won't say the same opinions — but certainly opinions of the same tendency. And there's something fine about youth — youth with its grand ideals. But unfortunately, Mr. Weinhold, they don't last; they are as fleeting as April sunshine. Wait till you are my age. When a man has said his say from the pulpit for thirty years — fifty-two times every year, not including saints' days — he has inevitably calmed down. Think of me, Mr. Weinhold, when you come that length.

Weinhold [nineteen, pale, thin, tall, with lanky fair hair; restless and nervous in his movements] — With all due respect, Mr. Kittelhaus — I can't think — people have such different natures.

Kittelhaus — My dear Mr. Weinhold, however restless-minded and unsettled a man may be — [in a tone of reproof] and you are a case in point — however violently and wantonly he may attack the existing order of things, he calms down in the end. I grant you, certainly, that among our professional brethren individuals are to be found, who, at a fairly advanced age, still play youthful pranks. One preaches against the drink evil and founds temperance societies, another publishes appeals which undoubtedly read most effectively. But what good do they do? The distress among the weavers, where it does exist, is in no way lessened — but the peace of society is undermined. No, no; one feels inclined in such cases to say: Cobbler, stick to your last; don't take to caring for the belly, you who have the care of souls. Preach the pure Word of God, and leave all else to Him who provides shelter and food for the birds, and clothes the lilies of the field. — But I should like to know

where our good host, Mr. Dreissiger, has suddenly disappeared to.

[MRS. DREISSIGER, followed by MRS. KITTELHAUS, now comes forward. She is a pretty woman of thirty, of a healthy, florid type. A certain discordance is noticeable between her deportment and way of expressing herself and her rich, elegant toilette.]

Mrs. Dreissiger — That's what I want to know too, Mr. Kittelhaus. But it's what William always does. No sooner does a thing come into his head than off he goes and leaves me in the lurch. I've said enough about it, but it does no good.

Kittelhaus — It's always the way with business men, my dear Mrs. Dreissiger.

Weinhold — I'm almost certain that something has happened downstairs.

DREISSIGER enters, hot and excited.

Dreissiger — Well, Rosa, is coffee served?

Mrs. Dreissiger [sulkily] — Fancy your needing to run away again!

Dreissiger [carelessly] — Ah! these are things you don't understand.

Kittelhaus — Excuse me — has anything happened to annoy you, Mr. Dreissiger?

Dreissiger — Never a day passes without that, my dear sir. I am accustomed to it. What about that coffee, Rosa?

[MRS. DREISSIGER goes ill-humoredly and gives one or two violent tugs at the broad embroidered bell-pull.]

Dreissiger — I wish you had been downstairs just now, Mr. Weinhold. You'd have gained a little experience. Besides — But now let us have our game of whist.

Kittelhaus — By all means, sir. Shake off the dust and burden of the day, Mr. Dreissiger; forget it in our company.

Dreissiger [has gone to the window, pushed aside a curtain, and is looking out] — Vile rabble!! Come here, Rosa! [She goes to the window.] Look — that tall red-haired fellow there! —

Kittelhaus — That's the man they call Red Becker.

Dreissiger — Is he the man that insulted you the day before yesterday? You remember what you told me — when John was helping you into the carriage?

Mrs. Dreissiger [pouting, carelessly] — I'm sure I don't know.

Dreissiger — Come now, what's the use of being cross? I must know. If he's the man, I mean to have him arrested. [*The strains of the Weavers' Song are heard.*] Listen to that! Just listen!

Kittelhaus [*highly incensed*] — Is there to be no end to this nuisance? I must acknowledge now that it is time for the police to interfere. Permit me. [*He goes forward to the window.*] See, see, Mr. Weinhold! These are not only young people. There are numbers of steady-going old weavers among them, men whom I have known for years and looked upon as most deserving and God-fearing. There they are, taking part in this intolerable uproar, trampling God's law under foot. Do you mean to tell me that you still defend these people?

Weinhold — Certainly not, Mr. Kittelhaus. That is, sir — *cum grano salis*. For after all, they are hungry and they are ignorant. They are giving expression to their dissatisfaction in the only way they understand. I don't expect that such people —

Mrs. Kittelhaus [*short, thin, faded, more like an old maid than a married woman*] — Mr. Weinhold, Mr. Weinhold, how can you?

Dreissiger — Mr. Weinhold, I am sorry to be obliged to — I didn't bring you into my house to give me lectures on philanthropy, and I must request that you will confine yourself to the education of my boys, and leave my other affairs entirely to me — entirely! Do you understand?

Weinhold [*stands for a moment rigid and deathly pale, then bows, with a strained smile. In a low voice*] — Certainly, of course I understand. I have seen this coming. It is my wish too. [*Goes out.*]

Dreissiger [*rudely*] — As soon as possible then, please. We require the room.

Mrs. Dreissiger — William, William!

Dreissiger — Have you lost your senses, Rosa, that you're taking the part of a man who defends a low, blackguardly libel like that song?

Mrs. Dreissiger — But, William, he didn't defend it.

Dreissiger — Mr. Kittelhaus, did he defend it or did he not?

Kittelhaus — His youth must be his excuse, Mr. Dreissiger.

Mrs. Kittelhaus — I can't understand it. The young man comes of such a good, respectable family. His father held a

public appointment for forty years, without a breath on his reputation. His mother was overjoyed at his getting this good situation here. And now — he himself shows so little appreciation of it.

Pfeifer [suddenly opens the door leading from the hall and shouts in] — Mr. Dreissiger, Mr. Dreissiger ! they've got him ! Will you come, please ? 'They've caught one of them.

Dreissiger [hastily] — Has some one gone for the police ?

Pfeifer — The Superintendent's on his way upstairs.

Dreissiger [at the door] — Glad to see you, sir. We want you here.

[KITTELHAUS makes signs to the ladies that it will be better for them to retire. He, his wife, and MRS. DREISSIGER disappear into the drawing-room.

Dreissiger [exasperated, to the Police Superintendent, who has now entered] — I have at last had one of the ringleaders seized by my dyers. I could stand it no longer — their insolence was beyond all bounds — quite unbearable. I have visitors in my house, and these blackguards dare to — They insult my wife whenever she shows herself ; my boys' lives are not safe. My visitors run the risk of being jostled and cuffed. Is it possible that in a well-ordered community incessant public insult offered to unoffending people like myself and my family should pass unpunished ? If so — then — then I must confess that I have other ideas of law and order.

Superintendent [a man of fifty, middle height, corpulent, full-blooded. He wears cavalry uniform, with a long sword and spurs] — No, no, Mr. Dreissiger — certainly not ! I am entirely at your disposal. Make your mind easy on the subject. Dispose of me as you will. What you have done is quite right. I am delighted that you have had one of the ringleaders arrested. I am very glad indeed that a settling day has come. There are a few disturbers of the peace here whom I have long had my eye on.

Dreissiger — Yes, one or two raw lads, lazy vagabonds, that shirk every kind of work, and lead a life of low dissipation, hanging about the public-houses until they've sent their last halfpenny down their throats. But I'm determined to put a stop to the trade of these professional blackguards once and for all. It's in the public interest to do so, not only my private interest.

Superintendent — Of course it is! Most undoubtedly, Mr. Dreissiger! No one can possibly blame you. And everything that lies in my power —

Dreissiger — The cat-o'-nine tails is what should be taken to the beggarly pack.

Superintendent — You're right, quite right. We must make an example.

[*KUTSCHE, the policeman, enters and salutes. The door is open, and the sound of heavy steps stumbling up the stair is heard.*]

Kutsche — I have to inform you, sir, that we have arrested a man.

Dreissiger [to Superintendent] — Do you wish to see the fellow?

Superintendent — Certainly, most certainly. We must begin by having a look at him at close quarters. Oblige me, Mr. Dreissiger, by not speaking to him at present. I'll see to it that you get complete satisfaction, or my name's not Heide.

Dreissiger — That's not enough for me, though. He goes before the magistrates. My mind's made up.

[*JAEGER is led in by five dyers, who have come straight from their work — faces, hands, and clothes stained with dye. The prisoner, his cap set jauntily on the side of his head, presents an appearance of impudent gayety; he is excited by the brandy he has just drunk.*]

Jaeger — Hounds that you are! — Call yourselves working-men! — Pretend to be comrades! Before I would do such a thing as lay hands on a mate, I'd see my hand rot off my arm!

[*At a sign from the Superintendent, KUTSCHE orders the dyers to let go their victim. JAEGER straightens himself up, quite free and easy. Both doors are guarded.*]

Superintendent [shouts to JAEGER] — Off with your cap, sir! [JAEGER takes it off, but very slowly, still with an impudent grin on his face.] What's your name?

Jaeger — What's yours? I'm not your swineherd.

[*Great excitement is produced among the audience by this reply.*]

Dreissiger — This is too much of a good thing.

Superintendent [changes color, is on the point of breaking out furiously, but controls his rage] — We'll see about this after-

wards. — Once more, what's your name? [*Receiving no answer, furiously.*] If you don't answer at once, fellow, I'll have you flogged on the spot.

Jaeger [*perfectly cheerful, not showing by so much as the twitch of an eyelid that he has heard the Superintendent's angry words, calls over the heads of those around him to a pretty servant girl, who has brought in the coffee and is standing open-mouthed with astonishment at the unexpected sight*] — Hillo, Emmy, do you belong to this company now? The sooner you find your way out of it, then, the better. A wind may begin to blow here, an' blow everything away overnight.

[*The girl stares at JAEGER, and as soon as she comprehends that it is to her he is speaking, blushes with shame, covers her eyes with her hands, and rushes out, leaving the coffee things in confusion on the table. Renewed excitement among those present.*

Superintendent [*half beside himself, to DREISSIGER*] — Never in all my long service — such a case of shameless effrontery —

[*JAEGER spits on the floor.*

Dreissiger — I'll thank you to remember that this is not a stable.

Superintendent — My patience is at an end now. For the last time : What's your name?

[*KITTELHAUS, who has been peering out at the partly opened drawing-room door, listening to what has been going on, can no longer refrain from coming forward to interfere. He is trembling with excitement.*

Kittelhaus — His name is Jaeger, sir. Moritz — is it not? Moritz Jaeger. [*To JAEGER.*] And, Jaeger, you know me.

Jaeger [*seriously*] — You are Pastor Kittelhaus.

Kittelhaus — Yes, I am your pastor, Jaeger ! It was I who received you, a babe in swaddling clothes, into the Church of Christ. From my hands you took for the first time the body of the Lord. Do you remember that, and how I toiled and strove to bring God's Word home to your heart? Is this your gratitude?

Jaeger [*like a scolded schoolboy. In a surly voice*] — I paid my half-crown like the rest.

Kittelhaus — Money, money — ! Do you imagine that the miserable little bit of money — Such utter nonsense ! I'd much rather you kept your money. Be a good man, be a Chris-

tian! Think of what you promised. Keep God's law. Money, money —!

Jaeger — I'm a Quaker now, sir. I don't believe in anything.

Kittelhaus — Quaker! What are you talking about? Try to behave yourself, and don't use words you don't understand. Quaker, indeed! They are good Christian people, and not heathens like you.

Superintendent — Mr. Kittelhaus, I must ask you — [*He comes between the Pastor and JAEGER.*] Kutsche! tie his hands!

[*Wild yelling outside: "JAEGER, JAEGER! come out!"*]

Dreissiger [*like the others, slightly startled, goes instinctively to the window*] — What's the meaning of this next?

Superintendent — Oh, I understand well enough. It means that they want to have the blackguard out among them again. But we're not going to oblige them. Kutsche, you have your orders. He goes to the lock-up.

Kutsche [*with the rope in his hand, hesitating*] — By your leave, sir, but it'll not be an easy job. There's a confounded big crowd out there—a pack of raging devils. They've got Becker with them, and the smith —

Kittelhaus — Allow me one more word! — So as not to rouse still worse feeling, would it not be better if we tried to arrange things peaceably? Perhaps Jaeger will give his word to go with us quietly, or —

Superintendent — Quite impossible! Think of my responsibility. I couldn't allow such a thing. Come, Kutsche! lose no more time.

Jaeger [*putting his hands together, and holding them out*] — Tight, tight, as tight as ever you can! It's not for long.

[*KUTSCHE, assisted by the workmen, ties his hands.*]

Superintendent — Now off with you, march! [*To DREISSIGER.*] If you feel anxious, let six of the weavers go with them. They can walk on each side of him, I'll ride in front, and Kutsche will bring up the rear. Whoever blocks the way will be cut down.

[*Cries from below: "Cock-a-doodle-doo-oo-oo! Bow, wow, wow!"*]

Superintendent [*with a threatening gesture in the direction of the window*] — You rascals, I'll cock-a-doodle-doo and bow-wow you! Forward! March! [*He marches out first, with drawn sword; the others, with JAEGER, follow.*]

Jaeger [shouts as he goes] — An' Mrs. Dreissiger there may play the lady as proud as she likes, but for all that she's no better than us. Many a hundred times she's served my father with a halfpenny-worth of schnapps. Left wheel — march!

[Exit laughing.]

Dreissiger [after a pause, with apparent calmness] — Well, Mr. Kittelhaus, shall we have our game now? I think there will be no further interruption. *[He lights a cigar, giving short laughs as he does so; when it is lighted, bursts into a regular fit of laughing.]* I'm beginning now to think the whole thing very funny. That fellow! *[Still laughing nervously.]* It really is too comical: first came the dispute at dinner with Weinhold — five minutes after that he takes leave — off to the other end of the world; then this affair crops up — and now we'll proceed with our whist.

Kittelhaus — Yes, but — *[Roaring is heard outside.]* Yes, but — that's a terrible uproar they're making outside.

Dreissiger — All we have to do is to go into the other room; it won't disturb us in the least there.

Kittelhaus [shaking his head] — I wish I knew what has come over these people. In so far I must agree with Mr. Weinhold, or at least till quite lately I was of his opinion, that the weavers were a patient, humble, easily led class. Was it not your idea of them, too, Mr. Dreissiger?

Dreissiger — Most certainly that is what they used to be — patient, easily managed, peaceable people. They were that as long as these so-called humanitarians let them alone. But for ever so long now they've had the awful misery of their condition held up to them. Think of all the societies and associations for the alleviation of the distress among the weavers. At last the weaver believes in it himself, and his head's turned. Some of them had better come and turn it back again, for now he's fairly set a-going there's no end to his complaining. This doesn't please him, and that doesn't please him. He must have everything of the best.

[A loud roar of "Hurrah!" is heard from the crowd.]

Kittelhaus — So that with all their humanitarianism they have only succeeded in almost literally turning lambs into wolves.

Dreissiger — I won't say that, sir. When you take time to think of the matter coolly, it's possible that some good may come of it yet. Such occurrences as this will not pass un-

noticed by those in authority, and may lead them to see that things can't be allowed to go on as they are doing—that means must be taken to prevent the utter ruin of our home industries.

Kittelhaus — Possibly. But what is the cause, then, of this terrible falling off of trade?

Dreissiger — Our best markets have been closed to us by the heavy import duties foreign countries have laid on our goods. At home the competition is terrible, for we have no protection, none whatever.

Pfeifer [*staggers in pale and breathless*] — Mr. Dreissiger, Mr. Dreissiger!

Dreissiger [*in the act of walking into the drawing-room, turns round, annoyed*] — Well, Pfeifer, what now?

Pfeifer — Oh sir! Oh sir! — It's worse than ever!

Dreissiger — What are they up to next?

Kittelhaus — You're really alarming us — what is it?

Pfeifer [*still confused*] — I never saw the like. Good Lord! — The Superintendent himself — they'll catch it for this yet.

Dreissiger — What's the matter with you, in the devil's name? Is any one's neck broken?

Pfeifer [*almost crying with fear, screams*] — They've set Moritz Jaeger free — they've thrashed the Superintendent and driven him away — they've thrashed the policeman and sent him off too — without his helmet — his sword broken — Oh dear, oh dear!

Dreissiger — I think you've gone crazy, Pfeifer.

Kittelhaus — This is actual riot.

Pfeifer [*sitting on a chair, his whole body trembling*] — It's turning serious, Mr. Dreissiger! Mr. Dreissiger, it's serious now!

Dreissiger — Well, if that's all the police —

Pfeifer — Mr. Dreissiger, it's serious now!

Dreissiger — Damn it all, Pfeifer, will you hold your tongue?

Mrs. Dreissiger [*coming out of the drawing-room with Mrs. KITTELHAUS*] — This is really too bad, William. Our whole evening's being spoiled. Here's Mrs. Kittelhaus saying that she'd better go home.

Kittelhaus — You mustn't take it amiss, dear Mrs. Dressiger, but perhaps, under the circumstances, it *would* be better —

Mrs. Dreissiger — But, William, why in the world don't you go out and put a stop to it?

Dreissiger — Go you and try if you can do it. Try! Go and speak to them! [*Standing helplessly in front of the Pastor.*] Am I such a tyrant? Am I a cruel master?

Enter JOHN the coachman.

John — If you please, m'm, I've put to the horses. Mr. Weinhold's put Georgie and Charlie into the carriage. If it comes to the worst, we're ready to be off.

Mrs. Dreissiger — If what comes to the worst?

John — I'm sure I don't know, m'm. But the crowd's gettin' bigger and bigger, an' they've sent the Superintendent an' the p'liceman to the right-about.

Pfeifer — It's serious now, Mr. Dreissiger! It's serious!

Mrs. Dreissiger [*with increasing alarm*] — What's going to happen? — What do the people want? — They're never going to attack us, John?

John — There's some rascally hounds among 'em, ma'am.

Pfeifer — It's serious now! serious!

Dreissiger — Hold your tongue, fool! — Are the doors barred?

Kittelhaus — I ask you as a favor, Mr. Dreissiger — as a favor — I am determined to — I ask you as a favor — [*To JOHN.*] What demands are the people making?

John [*awkwardly*] — It's higher wages they're after, the blackguards.

Kittelhaus — Good, good! — I shall go out and do my duty. I shall speak seriously to these people.

John — Oh sir, please sir, don't do any such thing. Words is quite useless.

Kittelhaus — One little favor, Mr. Dreissiger. May I ask you to post men behind the door, and to have it closed at once after me?

Mrs. Kittelhaus — Oh Joseph, Joseph! you're not really going out?

Kittelhaus — I am. Indeed I am. I know what I'm doing. Don't be afraid. God will protect me.

[*MRS. KITTELHAUS presses his hand, draws back, and wipes tears from her eyes.*]

Kittelhaus [*while the murmur of a great, excited crowd is heard uninterruptedly outside*] — I'll go — I'll go out as if I were simply on my way home. I shall see if my sacred office — if the people have not sufficient respect for me left to — I shall

try — [*He takes his hat and stick.*] Forward, then, in God's name!

[*Goes out accompanied by* DREISSIGER, PFEIFER, *and* JOHN.

Mrs. Kittelhaus — Oh, dear Mrs. Dreissiger! [*She bursts into tears and embraces her.*] I do trust nothing will happen to him.

Mrs. Dreissiger [*absently*] — I don't know how it is, Mrs. Kittelhaus, but I — I can't tell you how I feel. I didn't think such a thing was possible. It's — it's as if it was a sin to be rich. If I had been told about all this beforehand, Mrs. Kittelhaus, I don't know but what I would rather have been left in my own humble position.

Mrs. Kittelhaus — There are troubles and disappointments in every condition of life, Mrs. Dreissiger.

Mrs. Dreissiger — True, true, I can well believe that. And suppose we have more than other people — goodness me! we didn't steal it. It's been honestly got, every penny of it. It's not possible that the people can be going to attack us! If trade's bad, that's not William's fault, is it?

[*Loud, confused yelling is heard outside. While the two women stand gazing at each other, pale and startled, DREISSIGER rushes in.*

Dreissiger — Quick, Rosa — put on something, and get into the carriage. I'll be after you this moment.

[*He rushes to the strong-box, and takes out papers and various articles of value.*

Enter JOHN.

John — We're ready to start. But come quickly, before they get round to the back door.

Mrs. Dreissiger [*in a transport of fear, throwing her arms round JOHN'S neck*] — John, John, dear, good John! Save us, John. Save my boys! Oh, what is to become of us?

Dreissiger — Rosa, try to keep your head. Let John go.

John — Yes, yes, ma'am! Don't you be frightened. Our good horses 'll soon leave them all behind; an' whoever doesn't get out of the way 'll be driven over.

Mrs. Kittelhaus [*in helpless anxiety*] — But my husband — my husband? But, Mr. Dreissiger, my husband?

Dreissiger — He's in safety now, Mrs. Kittelhaus. Don't alarm yourself; he's all right.

Mrs. Kittelhaus — Something dreadful has happened to him. I know it. You needn't try to keep it from me.

Dreissiger — You mustn't take it to heart — they'll be sorry for it yet. I know exactly whose fault it was. Such a detestable, shameful outrage will not go unpunished. A community laying hands on its own pastor and maltreating him — abominable! Mad dogs they are — raging brutes — and they'll be treated as such. [*To his wife, who still stands petrified.*] Go, for my sake, Rosa, go quickly! [*The clatter of window-panes being smashed on the ground-floor is heard.*] They've gone quite mad. There's nothing for it but to get away as fast as we can.

[*Cries of "Feifer, come out!" — "We want Feifer!" — "Feifer, come out!" are heard.*

Mrs. Dreissiger — Feifer, Feifer, they want Feifer!

Pfeifer [*dashes in*] — Mr. Dreissiger, there are people at the back gate already, and the house door won't hold much longer. The smith's battering it in with a stable pail.

[*The cry sounds louder and clearer: "Feifer! Feifer! Feifer! come out!"* MRS. DREISSIGER *rushes off as if pursued.* MRS. KITTELHAUS *follows.* PFEIFER *listens, and changes color as he hears what the cry is. A perfect panic of fear seizes him; he weeps, entreats, whimpers, writhes, all at the same moment. He overwhelms DREISSIGER with childish caresses, strokes his cheeks and arms, kisses his hands, and at last, like a drowning man, throws his arms round him and prevents him moving.*

Pfeifer — Dear, good, kind Mr. Dreissiger, don't leave me behind. I've always served you faithfully. I've always treated the people well. I couldn't give them more wages than the fixed rate. Don't leave me here — they'll do for me! If they find me, they'll kill me. O God! O God! My wife, my children!

Dreissiger [*making his way out, vainly endeavoring to free himself from PFEIFER'S clutch*] — Can't you let me go, fellow? It'll be all right; it'll be all right.

[*For a few seconds the room is empty. Windows are broken in the drawing-room. A loud crash resounds through the house, followed by shouts of "Hurrah!" For an instant there is silence. Then gentle, cautious steps are heard on the stair, then timid, hushed ejaculations: "To the left!" — "Up with you!" —*

"*Hugh!*" — "*Slow, slow!*" — "*Don't shove like that!*" — "*It's a wedding we're goin' to!*" — "*Stop that crowding!*" — "*You'll go first!*" — "*No, you go!*"

[*Young weavers and weaver girls appear at the door leading from the hall, not daring to enter, but each trying to shove the other in. In the course of a few moments their timidity is overcome, and the poor, thin, ragged, or patched figures, many of them sickly-looking, disperse themselves through DREISSIGER'S room and the drawing-room, first gazing timidly and curiously at everything, then beginning to touch things. Girls sit down on the sofas, whole groups admire themselves in the mirrors, men stand up on chairs, examine the pictures and take them down. There is a steady influx of miserable-looking creatures from the hall.*]

First Old Weaver [entering] — No, no, this is carryin' it too far. They've started smashing things downstairs. There's no sense nor reason in that. There'll be a bad end to it. No man in his wits would do that. I'll keep clear of such on-goings.

[*JAEGER, BECKER, WITTIG carrying a wooden pail, BAUMERT, and a number of other old and young weavers rush in as if in pursuit of something, shouting hoarsely.*]

Jaeger — Where has he gone?

Becker — Where's the cruel brute?

Baumert — If we can eat grass, he may eat sawdust.

Wittig — We'll hang him whenever we catch him.

First Young Weaver — We'll take him by the legs and fling him out at the window, on to the stones. He'll never get up again.

Second Young Weaver [enters] — He's off!

All — Who?

Second Young Weaver — Dreissiger.

Becker — Feifer too?

Voices — Let's get hold of Feifer! Look for Feifer!

Baumert — Yes, yes! Feifer. Tell him there's a weaver here for him to starve. [Laughter.]

Jaeger — If we can't lay hands on that brute Dreissiger himself — we'll at any rate make a poor man of him.

Baumert — As poor as a church mouse — we'll see to that.

[*All, bent on the work of destruction, rush towards the drawing-room door.*]

Becker [who is leading, turns round and stops the others] — Halt! Listen to me! This is nothing but a beginning. When we're done here, we'll go straight to Bielau, to Dittrich's, where the steam power-looms are. The whole mischief's done by these factories.

Old Ansorge [enters from hall. Takes a few steps, then stops and looks round, bewildered; shakes his head, taps his forehead] — Who am I? Weaver Anton Ansorge. Has he gone mad, old Ansorge? My head's goin' round like a humming-top, sure enough. What's he doing here? He'll do whatever he's a mind to. Where is Ansorge? [He taps his forehead repeatedly.] Something's wrong! I'm not answerable! I'm off my head! Off with you, off with you, rioters that you are! Heads off, legs off, hands off! If you take my house, I take your house. Forwards, forwards!

[Goes yelling into the drawing-room, followed by a yelling, laughing mob.]

ACT V.

Langen-Bielau. — OLD WEAVER HILSE'S workroom. On the left a small window, in front of which stands the loom. On the right a bed, with a table pushed close to it. Stove, with stove-bench, in the right-hand corner. Family worship is going on. HILSE, his old, blind, and almost deaf wife, his son GOTTLIEB, and LUISE, GOTTLIEB'S wife, are sitting at the table, on the bed and wooden stools. A winding-wheel and bobbins on the floor between table and loom. Old spinning, weaving, and winding implements are disposed of on the smoky rafters; hanks of yarn are hanging down. There is much useless lumber in the low, narrow room. The door, which is in the back wall, and leads into the big outer passage, or entry-room of the house, stands open. Through another open door on the opposite side of the passage, a second, in most respects similar weaver's room is seen. The large passage, or entry-room of the house, is paved with stone, has damaged plaster, and a tumble-down wooden staircase leading to the attics; a washing-tub on a stool is partly visible; dirty linen of the most miserable description and poor household utensils lie about untidily. The light falls from the left into all three apartments.

OLD HILSE is a bearded man of strong build, but bent and wasted with age, toil, sickness, and hardship. He is an old soldier, and has lost an arm. His nose is sharp, his complexion ashen-gray, and he shakes; he is nothing but skin and bone, and has the deep-set, sore weaver's eyes.

Old Hilse [stands up, as do his son and daughter-in-law; prays] — O Lord, we know not how to be thankful enough to Thee, for that Thou hast spared us this night again in Thy goodness — an' hast had pity on us — an' hast suffered us to take no harm. Thou art the All-merciful, an' we are poor, sinful children of men — that bad that we are not worthy to be trampled under Thy feet. Yet Thou art our loving Father, an' Thou will look upon us an' accept us for the sake of Thy dear Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. "Jesus' blood and righteousness, Our covering is and glorious dress." An' if we're sometimes too sore cast down under Thy chastening — when the fire of Thy purification burns too raging hot — oh, lay it not to our charge; forgive us our sin. Give us patience, heavenly Father, that after all these sufferin's we may be made partakers of Thy eternal blessedness. Amen.

Mother Hilse [who has been bending forward trying hard to hear] — What a beautiful prayer you do say, father!

[*LUISE goes off to the wash-tub, GOTTLIEB to the room on the other side of the passage.*]

Old Hilse — Where's the little lass?

Luise — She's gone to Peterswaldau, to Dreissiger's. She finished all she had to wind last night.

Old Hilse [speaking very loud] — You'd like the wheel now, mother, eh?

Mother Hilse — Yes, father, I'm quite ready.

Old Hilse [setting it down before her] — I wish I could do the work for you.

Mother Hilse — An' what would be the good of that, father? There would I be, sittin' not knowin' what to do.

Old Hilse — I'll give your fingers a wipe, then, so that they'll not grease the yarn. [*He wipes her hands with a rag.*]

Luise [at her tub] — If there's grease on her hands, it's not from what she's eaten.

Old Hilse — If we've no butter, we can eat dry bread — when we've no bread, we can eat potatoes — when there's no potatoes left, we can eat bran.

Luise [saucily] — An' when that's all eaten, we'll do as the Wenglers did — we'll find out where the skinner's buried some stinking old horse, an' we'll dig it up an' live for a week or two on rotten carrion — how nice that'll be!

Gottlieb [from the other room] — There you are, letting that tongue of yours run away with you again.

Old Hilse — You should think twice, lass, before you talk that godless way. [*He goes to his loom, calls.*] Can you give me a hand, Gottlieb? — there's a few threads to pull through.

Luise [*from her tub*] — Gottlieb, you're wanted to help father.

GOTTLIEB comes in, and he and his father set themselves to the troublesome task of "drawing and slaying," that is, pulling the strands of the warp through the "heddles" and "reed" of the loom. They have hardly begun to do this when HORNIG appears in the outer room.

Hornig [*at the door*] — Good luck to your work!

Hilse and his Son — Thank you, Hornig.

Gottlieb — I say, Hornig, when do you take your sleep? You're on your rounds all day, and on watch all night.

Hornig — Sleep's gone from me nowadays.

Luise — Glad to see you, Hornig!

Old Hilse — And what's the news?

Hornig — It's queer news this mornin'. The weavers at Peterswaldau have taken the law into their own hands, an' chased Dreissiger an' his whole family out of the place.

Luise [*perceptibly agitated*] — Hornig's at his lies again.

Hornig — No, missus, not this time, not to-day. --- I've some beautiful pinafores in my cart. — No, it's God's truth I'm telling you. They've sent him to the right-about. He came down to Reichenbach last night, but, Lord love you! they daren't take him in there, for fear of the weavers — off he had to go again, all the way to Schweinitz.

Old Hilse [*has been carefully lifting threads of the web and approaching them to the holes, through which, from the other side, GOTTLIEB pushes a wire hook, with which he catches them and draws them through*] — It's about time you were stopping now, Hornig!

Hornig — It's as sure as I'm a livin' man. Every child in the place 'll soon tell you the same story.

Old Hilse — Either your wits are a-wool-gatherin' or mine are.

Hornig — Not mine. What I'm telling you's as true as the Bible. I wouldn't believe it myself if I hadn't stood there an' seen it with my own eyes — as I see you now, Gottlieb. They've wrecked his house from the cellar to the roof. The good china came flyin' out at the garret windows, rattlin' down the roof.

God only knows how many pieces of fustian are lyin' soakin' in the river! The water can't get away for them—it's running over the banks, the color of washin'-blue, with all the indigo they've poured out at the windows—it was flyin' like clouds of sky blue dust. Oh, it's a terrible destruction they've worked! And it's not only the house—it's the dye-works, too—an' the stores! They've broken the stair rails, they've torn up the fine flooring—smashed the lookin'-glasses—cut an' hacked an' torn an' smashed the sofas an' the chairs. — It's awful—it's worse than war.

Old Hilse — An' you would have me believe that my fellow-weavers did all that?

[He shakes his head incredulously. Other tenants of the house have collected at the door, and are listening eagerly.]

Hornig — Who else, I'd like to know? I could put names to every one of 'em. It was me took the Sheriff through the house, an' I spoke to a whole lot of 'em, an' they answered me back quite friendly like. They did their business with little noise, but my word! they did it well. The Sheriff spoke to them, and they answered him mannerly, as they always do. But there wasn't no stoppin' of them. They hacked on at the beautiful furniture as if they were workin' for wages.

Old Hilse — You took the Sheriff through the house?

Hornig — An' what would I be frightened of? Every one knows me. I'm always turning up, like a bad penny. But no one has anything agin' me. They're all glad to see me. Yes, I went the rounds with him, as sure as my name's Hornig. An' you may believe me or not, as you like, but my heart's sore yet from the sight—an' I could see by the Sheriff's face that he felt queer enough too. Not a living word did we hear—they were doin' their work and holdin' their tongues. It was a solemn an' a woeful sight to see the poor starving creatures for once in a way takin' their revenge.

Luise [with irrepressible excitement, trembling, wiping her eyes with her apron] — An' right they are! It's only what should be!

Voices among the Crowd at the Door — "There's some of the same sort here." — "There's one no farther away than across the river." — "He's got four horses in his stable an' six carriages, an' he starves his weavers to keep them."

Old Hilse [still incredulous] — What was it set them off?

Hornig — Who knows? who knows? One says this, another says that.

Old Hilse — What do they say?

Hornig — The story as most of them tells is that it began with Dreissiger sayin'. that if the weavers were hungry, they might eat grass.

[*Excitement at the door, as one person repeats this to another, with signs of indignation.*]

Old Hilse — Well now, *Hornig* — if you was to say to me: Father Hilse, says you, you'll die to-morrow, I would answer back: That may be — an' why not? You might even go to the length of saying: You'll have a visit to-morrow from the King of Prussia. But to tell me that weavers, men like me an' my son, have done such things as that — never! I'll never in this world believe it.

Mielchen [*a pretty girl of seven, with long, loose flaxen hair, carrying a basket on her arm, comes running in, holding out a silver spoon to her mother*] — Mammy, mammy! look what I've got! An' you're to buy me a new frock with it.

Luise — What d'you come tearing in like that for, girl? [*With increased excitement and curiosity.*] An' what's that you've got hold of now? You've been runnin' yourself out o' breath, an' there — if the bobbins aren't in her basket yet? What's all this about?

Old Hilse — *Mielchen*, where did that spoon come from?

Luise — She found it, maybe.

Hornig — It's worth its seven or eight shillin's at least.

Old Hilse [*in distressed excitement*] — Off with you, lass — out of the house this moment — unless you want a lickin'! Take that spoon back where you got it from. Out you go! Do you want to make thieves of us all, eh? I'll soon drive that out of you. [*He looks round for something to beat her with.*]

Mielchen [*clinging to her mother's skirts, crying*] — No, grandfather, no! don't lick me! We — did find them. All the other bob — bobbin — girls has — has them too.

Luise [*half frightened, half excited*] — I was right, you see. She found it. Where did you find it, *Mielchen*?

Mielchen [*sobbing*] — At — at Peterswal — dau. We — we found them in front of — in front of Drei — Dreissiger's house.

Old Hilse — This is worse an' worse! Get off with you this moment, unless you would like me to help you.

Mother Hilse — What's all the to-do about?

Hornig — I'll tell you what, Father Hilse. The best way'll be for Gottlieb to put on his coat an' take the spoon to the police-office.

Old Hilse — Gottlieb, put on your coat.

Gottlieb [*pulling it on, eagerly*] — Yes, an' I'll go right in to the office an' say they're not to blame us for it, for what can a child like that understand about it? an' I brought the spoon back at once. Stop your crying now, Mielchen!

[*The crying child is taken into the opposite room by her mother, who shuts her in and comes back.*]

Hornig — I believe it's worth as much as nine shillin's.

Gottlieb — Give us a cloth to wrap it in, Luise, so that it'll take no harm. To think of the thing bein' worth all that money!

[*Tears come into his eyes while he is wrapping up the spoon.*]

Luise — If it was only ours, we could live on it for many a day.

Old Hilse — Hurry up now! Look sharp! As quick as ever you can. A fine state o' matters this! Get that devil's spoon out o' the house. [*GOTTLIEB goes off with the spoon.*]

Hornig — I must be off now too.

[*He goes, is seen talking to the people in the entry-room before he leaves the house.*]

Surgeon Schmidt [*a jerky little ball of a man, with a red, knowing face, comes into the entry-room*] — Good morning, all! These are fine goings on! Take care! take care! [*Threatening with his finger.*] You're a sly lot — that's what you are. [*At HILSE'S door without coming in.*] Morning, Father Hilse. [*To a woman in the outer room.*] And how are the pains, mother? Better, eh? Well, well. And how's all with you, Father Hilse? [*Enters.*] Why the deuce! what's the matter with mother?

Luise — It's the eye veins, sir — they've dried up, so as she can't see at all now.

Surgeon Schmidt — That's from the dust and weaving by candle-light. Will you tell me what it means that all Peterswaldau's on the way here? I set off on my rounds this morning as usual, thinking no harm; but it wasn't long till I had my eyes opened. Strange doings these! What in the devil's name has taken possession of them, Hilse? They're like a pack

of raging wolves. Riot — why, it's revolution! they're plundering and laying waste right and left — Mielchen! where's Mielchen? [*MIELCHEN, her face red with crying, is pushed in by her mother.*] Here, Mielchen, put your hand into my coat pocket. [*MIELCHEN does so.*] The ginger-bread nuts are for you. Not all at once, though, you baggage! And a song first! The fox jumped up on a — come, now, — The fox jumped up — on a moonlight — Mind, I've heard what you did. You called the sparrows on the churchyard hedge a nasty name, and they're gone and told the pastor. Did any one ever hear the like? Fifteen hundred of them agog — men, women, and children. [*Distant bells are heard.*] That's at Reichenbach — alarm-bells! Fifteen hundred people! Uncomfortably like the world coming to an end!

Old Hilse — An' is it true that they're on their way to Bielau?

Surgeon Schmidt — That's just what I'm telling you. I've driven through the middle of the whole crowd. What I'd have liked to do would have been to get down and give each of them a pill there and then. They were following on each other's heels like grim death, and their singing was more than enough to turn a man's stomach. I was nearly sick, and Frederick was shaking on the box like an old woman. We had to take a stiff glass at the first opportunity. I wouldn't be a manufacturer, not though I could drive my carriage and pair. [*Distant singing.*] Listen to that! It's for all the world as if they were beating at some broken old boiler. We'll have them here in five minutes, friends. Good-bye! Don't you be foolish. The troops will be upon them in no time. Keep your wits about you. The Peterswaldau people have lost theirs. [*Bells ring close at hand.*] Good gracious! There are our bells ringing too! Every one's going mad. [*He goes upstairs.*]

Gottlieb [*comes back. In the entry-room, out of breath*] — I've seen them, I've seen them! [*To a woman.*] They're here, Auntie, they're here! [*At the door.*] They're here, father, they're here! They've got bean-poles, an' ox-goads, an' axes. They're standin' outside the upper Dittrich's kickin' up an awful row. I think he's payin' them money. O Lord! whatever's going to happen? What a crowd! Oh, you never saw such a crowd! Dash it all — if once they make a rush, our manufacturers'll be hard put to it.

Old Hilse — What have you been runnin' like that for?

You'll go racin' till you bring on your old trouble, and then we'll have you on your back again, strugglin' for breath.

Gottlieb [almost joyously excited] — I had to run, or they would have caught me an' kept me. They were all roarin' to me to join them. Father Baumert was there too, and says he to me: You come an' get your sixpence with the rest — you're a poor starving weaver too. An' I was to tell you, father, from him, that you were to come an' help to pay out the manufacturers for their grindin' of us down. Other times is coming, he says. There's going to be a change of days for us weavers. An' we're all to come an' help to bring it about. We're to have our half-pound of meat on Sundays, and now and again on a holiday sausage with our cabbage. Yes, things is to be quite different, by what he tells me.

Old Hilse [with repressed indignation] — An' that man calls himself your godfather! and he bids you take part in such works of wickedness? Have nothing to do with them, Gottlieb. They've let themselves be tempted by Satan, an' it's his works they're doin'.

Luise [no longer able to retain her passionate excitement, vehemently] — Yes, Gottlieb, get into the chimney corner, an' take a spoon in your hand, an' a dish of skim milk on your knee, an' put on a petticoat an' say your prayers, an' then father'll be pleased with you. And he sets up to be a man!

[Laughter from the people in the entry-room.]

Old Hilse [quivering with suppressed rage] — An' you set up to be a good wife, eh? You call yourself a mother, an' let your evil tongue run away with you like that? You think yourself fit to teach your girl, you that would egg on your husband to crime an' wickedness?

Luise [has lost all control of herself] — You an' your piety an' religion — did they serve to keep the life in my poor children? In rags an' dirt they lay, all the four — it didn't as much as keep them dry. Yes! I set up to be a mother, that's what I do — an' if you'd like to know it, that's why I would send all the manufacturers to hell — because I'm a mother! — Not one of the four could I keep in life! It was cryin' more than breathin' with me from the time each poor little thing came into the world till death took pity on it. The devil a bit you cared! You sat there prayin' and singin', and let me run about till my feet bled, tryin' to get one little drop o' skim milk. How many hundred nights have I lain an' racked my

head to think what I could do to cheat the churchyard of my little one? What harm has a baby like that done that it must come to such a miserable end — eh? An' over there at Ditrich's they're bathed in wine an' washed in milk. No! you may talk as you like, but if they begin here, ten horses won't hold me back. An' what's more — if there's a rush on Ditrich's, you'll see me in the forefront of it — an' pity the man as tries to prevent me. — I've stood it long enough, so now you know it.

Old Hilse — You're a lost soul — there's no help for you.

Luise [frenzied] — It's you that there's no help for! Tatter-breeched scarecrows — that's what you are — an' not men at all. Whey-faced gutter-scrapers that take to your heels at the sound of a child's rattle. Fellows that say "thank you" to the man as gives you a hidin'. They've not left that much blood in you as that you can turn red in the face. You should have the whip taken to you, an' a little pluck flogged into your rotten bones. *[She goes out quickly.]*

[Embarrassed pause.]

Mother Hilse — What's the matter with Liesl, father?

Old Hilse — Nothin', mother! What should be the matter with her?

Mother Hilse — Father, is it only me that's thinkin' it, or are the bells ringin'?

Old Hilse — It'll be a funeral, mother.

Mother Hilse — An' I've got to sit waitin' here yet. Why must I be so long a-dyin', father? *[Pause.]*

Old Hilse [leaves his work, holds himself up straight; solemnly] — Gottlieb! — you heard all your wife said to us. Look here, Gottlieb! *[He bares his breast.]* Here they cut out a bullet as big as a thimble. The King knows where I lost my arm. It wasn't the mice as ate it. *[He walks up and down.]* Before that wife of yours was ever thought of, I had spilled my blood by the quart for King an' country. So let her call what names she likes — an' welcome! It does me no harm. — Frightened? Me frightened? What would I be frightened of, will you tell me that? Of the few soldiers, maybe, that'll be comin' after the rioters? Good gracious me! That would be a lot to be frightened at! No, no, lad; I may be a bit stiff in the back, but there's some strength left in the old bones; I've got the stuff in me yet to make a stand against a few rubbishin' bay'nets. — An' if it came to the worst! Willin', willin' would I

be to say good-bye to this weary world. Death would be welcome — welcome to me to-day than to-morrow. For what is it we leave behind? That old bundle of aches an' pains we call our body, the care an' the oppression we call by the name of life. We may be glad to get away from it. — But there's something to come after, Gottlieb! — an' if we've done ourselves out of that too — why, then, it's all over with us!

Gottlieb — Who knows what's to come after? Nobody's seen it.

Old Hilse — Gottlieb! don't you be throwin' doubts on the one comfort us poor people have. Why have I sat here an' worked my treadle like a slave this forty year an' more? — sat still an' looked on at him over yonder livin' in pride an' wastefulness — why? Because I have a better hope, something as supports me in all my troubles. [*Points out at the window.*] You have your good things in this world — I'll have mine in the next. That's been my thought. An' I'm that certain of it — I'd let myself be torn in pieces. Have we not His promise? There's a Day of Judgment coming; but it's not us as are the judges — no: vengeance is mine, saith the Lord.

[*A cry of "Weavers come out!" is heard outside the window.*]

Old Hilse — Do what you will for me. [*He seats himself at his loom.*] I stay here.

Gottlieb [*after a short struggle*] — I'm going to work too — come what may. [*Goes out.*]

[*The Weavers' Song is heard, sung by hundreds of voices quite close at hand; it sounds like a dull, monotonous wail.*]

Inmates of the House [*in the entry-room*] — "Oh, mercy on us! there they come swarmin' like ants!" — "Where can all these weavers be from?" — "Don't shove like that, I want to see too." — "Look at that great maypole of a woman leadin' on in front!" — "Gracious! they're comin' thicker an' thicker."

Hornig [*comes into the entry-room from outside*] — There's a theayter play for you now! That's what you don't see every day. But you should go up to the other Dittrich's an' look what they've done there. It's been no half work. He's got no house now, nor no factory, nor no wine-cellar, nor nothing. They're drinkin' out of the bottles — not so much as takin' the time to get out the corks. One, two, three, an' off with the neck, an' no matter whether they cut their mouths or not. There's some of them runnin' about bleedin' like stuck pigs. — Now they're goin' to do for this Dittrich.

[*The singing has stopped.*]

Inmates of the House — There's nothin' so very wicked like about them.

Hornig — You wait a bit! you'll soon see! All they're doin' just now is makin' up their minds where they'll begin. Look, they're inspectin' the palace from every side. Do you see that little stout man there, him with the stable pail? That's the smith from Peterswaldau — an' a dangerous little chap he is. He batters in the thickest doors as if they were made o' pie-crust. If a manufacturer was to fall into his hands, it would be all over with him!

House Inmates — "That was a crack!" — "There went a stone through the window!" — "There's old Dittrich, shakin' with fright." — "He's hangin' out a board." — "Hangin' out a board?" — "What's written on it?" — "Can you not read?" — "It would be a bad job for me if I couldn't read!" — "Well, read it, then!" — "You — shall have — full — satis-faction! You — shall have full satisfaction."

Hornig — He might ha' spared himself the trouble — *that* won't help him. It's something else they've set their minds on here. It's the factories. They're goin' to smash up the power-looms. For it's them that are ruinin' the hand-loom weaver. Even a blind man might see that. No! the good folks know what they're after, an' no sheriff an' no p'lice super-intendent'll bring them to reason — much less a bit of a board. Him as has seen them at work already knows what's comin'.

House Inmates — "Did any one ever see such a crowd!" — "What can these ones be wantin'?" — [*Hastily.*] "They're crossin' the bridge!" — [*Anxiously.*] "They're never comin' over on this side, are they?" — [*In excitement and terror.*] "It's to us they're comin'! They're comin' to us! They're comin' to fetch the weavers out of their houses!"

[*General flight. The entry-room is empty. A crowd of dirty, dusty rioters rush in, their faces scarlet with brandy and excitement; tattered, untidy-looking, as if they had been up all night. With the shout: "Weavers, come out!" they disperse themselves through the house. BECKER and several other young weavers, armed with cudgels and poles, come into OLD HILSE'S room. When they see the old man at his loom they start, and cool down a little.*

Becker — Come, Father Hilse, stop that. Leave your work to them as wants to work. There's no need now for you to be doin' yourself harm. You'll be well taken care of.

First Young Weaver — You'll never need to go hungry to bed again.

Second Young Weaver — The weaver's goin' to have a roof over his head an' a shirt on his back once more.

Old Hilse — An' what's the devil sendin' you to do now, with your poles an' axes?

Becker — These are what we're goin' to break on Dittrich's back.

Second Young Weaver — We'll heat them red hot an' stick them down the manufacturers' throats, so as they'll feel for once what burnin' hunger tastes like.

Third Young Weaver — Come along, Father Hilse! We'll give no quarter.

Second Young Weaver — No one had mercy on us — neither God nor man. Now we're standin' up for our rights ourselves.

OLD BAUMERT *enters, somewhat shaky on the legs, a newly killed cock under his arm.*

Old Baumert [stretching out his arms] — My brothers — we're all brothers! Come to my arms, brothers! [*Laughter.*

Old Hilse — And that's the state you're in, Willem?

Old Baumert — Gustav, is it you? My poor starvin' friend! Come to my arms, Gustav!

Old Hilse [mutters] — Let me alone.

Old Baumert — I'll tell you what, Gustav. It's nothin' but luck that's wanted. You look at me. What do I look like? Luck's what's wanted. Do I not look like a lord? [*Pats his stomach.*] Guess what's in there! There's food fit for a prince in that belly. When luck's with him a man gets roast hare to eat an' champagne wine to drink. — I'll tell you all something: We've made a big mistake — we must help ourselves.

All [speaking at once] — We must help ourselves, hurrah!

Old Baumert — As soon as we get the first good bite inside us we're different men. Damn it all! but you feel the power comin' into you till you're like an ox, an' that wild with strength that you hit out right an' left without as much as takin' time to look. Dash it, but it's grand!

Jaeger [at the door, armed with an old cavalry sword] — We've made one or two first-rate attacks.

Becker — We know how to set about it now. One, two, three, an' we're inside the house. Then at it like lightning —

bang, crack, shiver ! till the sparks are flyin' 'as if it was a smithy.

First Young Weaver — It wouldn't be half bad to light a bit o' fire.

Second Young Weaver — Let's march to Reichenbach an' burn the rich folks' houses over their heads !

Jaeger — That would be nothing but butterin' their bread. Think of all the insurance money they'd get. [Laughter.

Becker — No, from here we'll go to Freiburg, to Tromtra's.

Jaeger — What would you say to givin' all them as holds Government appointments a lesson ? I've read somewhere as how all our troubles come from them birocraats, as they call them.

Second Young Weaver — Before long we'll go to Breslau, for more an' more'll be joining us.

Old Baumert [to HILSE] — Won't you take a drop, Gustav ?

Old Hilse — I never touches it.

Old Baumert — That was in the old world ; we're in a new world to-day, Gustav.

First Young Weaver — Christmas comes but once a year.

[Laughter.

Old Hilse [impatiently] — What is it you want in my house, you limbs of Satan ?

Old Baumert [a little intimidated, coaxingly] — I was bringin' you a chicken, Gustav. I thought it would make a drop o' soup for mother.

Old Hilse [embarrassed, almost friendly] — Well, you can tell mother yourself.

Mother Hilse [who has been making efforts to hear, her hand at her ear, motions them off] — Let me alone. I don't want no chicken soup.

Old Hilse — That's right, mother. An' I want none, an' least of all that sort. An' let me say this much to you, Baumert : The devil stands on his head for joy when he hears the old ones jabberin' and talkin' as if they was infants. An' to you all I say — to every one of you : Me and you, we've got nothing to do with each other. It's not with my will that you're here. In law an' justice you've no right to be in my house.

A Voice — Him that's not with us is against us.

Jaeger [roughly and threateningly] — You're a cross-grained old chap, and I'd have you remember that we're not thieves.

A Voice — We're hungry men, that's all.

First Young Weaver — We want to *live* — that's all. An' so we've cut the rope we were hung up with.

Jaeger — And we were in our right. [*Holding his fist in front of the old man's face.*] Say another word, and I'll give you one between the eyes.

Becker — Come now, Jaeger, be quiet. Let the old man alone. — What we say to ourselves, Father Hilse, is this: Better dead than begin the old life again.

Old Hilse — Have I not lived that life for sixty years an' more?

Becker — That doesn't help us — there's got to be a change.

Old Hilse — On the Judgment Day.

Becker — What they'll not give us willingly, we're going to take by force.

Old Hilse — By force? [*Laughs.*] You may as well go an' dig your graves at once. They'll not be long showin' you where the force lies. Wait a bit, lad!

Jaeger — Is it the soldiers you're meaning? We've been soldiers, too. We'll soon do for a company or two of them.

Old Hilse — With your tongues, maybe. But supposin' you did — for two that you'd beat off, ten'll come back.

Voices [*call through the window*] — The soldiers are comin'! Look out!

[*General, sudden silence. For a moment a faint sound of fifes and drums is heard; in the ensuing silence a short, involuntary exclamation: "The devil! I'm off!" followed by general laughter.*]

Becker — Who was that? Who speaks of running away?

Jaeger — Which of you is it that's afraid of a few paltry helmets? You have me to command you, and I've been in the trade. I know their tricks.

Old Hilse — An' what are you goin' to shoot with? Your sticks, eh?

First Young Weaver — Never mind that old chap; he's wrong in the upper story.

Second Young Weaver — Yes, he's a bit off his head.

Gottlieb [*has made his way unnoticed among the rioters; catches hold of the speaker*] — Would you give your impudence to an old man like him?

Second Young Weaver — Let me alone. 'Twasn't anything bad I said.

Old Hilse [interfering] — Let him jaw, Gottlieb. What would you be meddlin' with him for? He'll soon see who it is that's been off his head to-day, him or me.

Becker — Are you comin', Gottfried?

Old Hilse — No, he's goin' to do no such thing.

Luise [comes into the entry-room, calls] — What are you puttin' off your time with prayin' hypocrites like them for? Come quick to where you're wanted! Quick! Father Baumert, run all you can! The Major's speakin' to the crowd from horseback. They're to go home. If you don't hurry up, it'll be all over.

Jaeger [as he goes out] — That's a brave husband of yours.

Luise — Where is he? I've got no husband!

Some of the people in the entry-room sing:

Once on a time a man so small,
Heigh-ho, heigh!
Set his heart on a wife so tall,
Heigh diddle-di-dum-di!

Wittig, the smith [comes downstairs, still carrying the stable pail; stops on his way through the entry-room] — Come on! all of you that are not cowardly scoundrels! — hurrah!

[He dashes out, followed by LUISE, JAEGER, and others, all shouting "Hurrah!"

Becker — Good-bye, then, Father Hilse; we'll see each other again. *[Is going.]*

Old Hilse — I doubt that. I've not five years to live, and that'll be the soonest you'll get out.

Becker [stops, not understanding] — Out o' what, Father Hilse?

Old Hilse — Out of prison — where else?

Becker [laughs wildly] — Do you think I would mind that? There's bread to be had there, anyhow! *[Goes out.]*

Old Baumert [has been cowering on a low stool, painfully beating his brains; he now gets up.] It's true, Gustav, as I've had a drop too much. But for all that I know what I'm about. You think one way in this here matter; I think another. I say Becker's right: even if it ends in chains an' ropes — we'll be better off in prison than at home. You're cared for there, an' you don't need to starve. I wouldn't have joined them, Gustav, if I could have let it be; but once in a lifetime a man's got to show what he feels. *[Goes slowly towards the*

door.] Good-bye, Gustav. If anything happens, mind you put in a word for me in your prayers. [Goes out.

[The rioters are now all gone. The entry-room gradually fills again with curious onlookers from the different rooms of the house. OLD HILSE knots at his web. GOTTLIEB has taken an ax from behind the stove and is unconsciously feeling its edge. He and the old man are silently agitated. The hum and roar of a great crowd penetrate into the room.

Mother Hilse — 'The very boards is shakin', father — what's goin' on? What's goin' to happen to us?

[Pause.

Old Hilse — Gottlieb!

Gottlieb — What is it?

Old Hilse — Let that ax alone.

Gottlieb — Who's to split the wood, then? [He leans the ax against the stove.] [Pause.

Mother Hilse — Gottlieb, you listen to what father says to you.

[Some one sings outside the window:

Our little man does all that he can,

Heigh-ho, heigh!

At home cleans the pots an' the pan,

Heigh-diddle-di-dum-di!

[Passes on.

Gottlieb [jumps up, shakes his clenched fist at the window] — Brute that you are, would you drive me crazy?

[A volley of musketry is heard.

Mother Hilse [starts and trembles] — Good Lord! is that thunder again?

Old Hilse [instinctively folding his hands] — Oh, our Father in heaven! defend the poor weavers, protect my poor brothers!

[A short pause ensues.

Old Hilse [to himself, painfully agitated] — There's blood flowing now.

Gottlieb [had started up and grasped the ax when the shooting was heard; deathly pale, almost beside himself with excitement] — And am I to lie to heel like a dog still?

A Girl [calls from the entry-room] — Father Hilse, Father Hilse! get away from the window. A bullet's just flown in at ours upstairs. [Disappears.

Mielchen [*puts her head in at the window, laughing*] — Gran'-father, gran'-father, they've shot with their guns. Two or three's been knocked down, and one of them's turnin' round and round like a top, and one's twistin' himself like a sparrow when its head's bein' pulled off. An' oh, if you saw all the blood that came pourin' — !
[*Disappears.*]

A Weaver's Wife — Yes, there's two or three'll never get up again.

An Old Weaver [*in the entry-room*] — Look out! They're goin' to make a rush on the soldiers.

A Second Weaver [*wildly*] — Look, look, look at the women! skirts up, an' spittin' in the soldiers' faces already!

A Weaver's Wife [*calls in*] — Gottlieb, look at your wife. She's more pluck in her than you. She's jumpin' about in front o' the bay'nets as if she was dancin' to music.

[*Four men carry a wounded rioter through the entry-room. Silence, which is broken by some one saying in a distinct voice, "It's Weaver Ulbrich." Once more silence for a few seconds, when the same voice is heard again: "It's all over with him: He's got a bullet in his ear." The men are heard climbing the wooden stair. Sudden shouting outside: "Hurrah, hurrah!"*]

Voices in the entry-room — "Where did they get the stones from?" — "Yes, it's time you were off!" — "From the new road." — "Ta-ta, soldiers!" — "It's raining paving-stones."

[*Shrieks of terror and loud roaring outside, taken up by those in the entry-room. There is a cry of fear, and the house door is shut with a bang.*]

Voices in the entry-room — "They're loading again." — "They'll fire another volley this minute." — "Father Hilse, get away from that window."

Gottlieb [*clutches the ax*] — What! are we mad dogs? Are we to eat powder an' shot now instead of bread? [*Hesitating an instant: to the old man.*] Would you have me sit here an' see my wife shot? Never! [*As he rushes out.*] Look out! I'm coming!

Old Hilse — Gottlieb, Gottlieb!

Mother Hilse — Where's Gottlieb gone?

Old Hilse — He's gone to the devil.

Voices from the entry-room — Go away from the window, Father Hilse!

Old Hilse — Not I! Not if you all go crazy together! [*To MOTHER HILSE, with rapt excitement.*] My heavenly Father has placed me here. Isn't that so, mother? Here we'll sit, an' do our bounden duty — ay, though the snow was to go on fire. [*He begins to weave.*]

[*Rattle of another volley. OLD HILSE, mortally wounded, starts to his feet and then falls forward over the loom. At the same moment loud shouting of "Hurrah!" is heard. The people who till now have been standing in the entry-room dash out, joining in the cry. The old woman repeatedly asks: "Father, father, what's wrong with you?" The continued shouting dies away gradually in the distance. MIELCHEN comes rushing in.*

Mielchen — Gran'father, gran'father, they're drivin' the soldiers out of the village; they've got into Dittrich's house, an' they're doin' what they did at Dreissiger's. Gran'father! [*The child grows frightened, notices that something has happened, puts her finger in her mouth, and goes up cautiously to the dead man.*] Gran'father!

Mother Hilse — Come now, father, can't you say something? You're frightenin' me.

THE JOURNALISTS.

BY GUSTAV FREYTAG.

(Translated for this work.)

[GUSTAV FREYTAG, one of the chief German novelists and playwrights of the century, was the son of a physician of Kreuzberg in Silesia, and born there July 13, 1816. He studied at the universities of Breslau and Berlin, the latter giving him a Ph.D.; 1839-1844 was *privatdocent* at Breslau, lecturing on German language and literature; resigning to devote himself to literature, he lived in Leipzig and Dresden; in 1848 returned to Leipzig and till 1867 was co-editor with Julian Schmidt of the weekly *Die Grenzboten*, as later 1869-1870; being in 1867 chosen Liberal member for Erfurt to the North German Reichstag, it is obvious that the professor-Liberal-journalist Oldendorf in the play here given is drawn from himself. From the outset of the Franco-German War of 1870 till after Sedan he was on the Crown Prince's staff. Later he edited for several years the paper *Im Neuen Reich* (In the New Kingdom), but in 1789 retired and lived in Wiesbaden till his death, April 30, 1895. Outside journalism, the first ten years of his literary work was entirely drama, save for a volume of poems in 1845, "In Breslau." His first two plays, "The Wedding Journey" (comedy, 1844) and "The Savant" (tragedy, 1845) had little success; but "The Valentine" (comedy, 1846) had a great run. "Count Waldemar" followed in 1847. But the last but one of his plays, the one here presented, was not only his masterpiece, but a tremendous public hit, remains the foremost German comedy of the century, and still holds the stage. "The Fabii" came last in 1859, but he had already begun a much more distinguished career as novelist. "Debit and Credit" (1855), still a classic of its kind, and a great immediate success, is a powerful "problem novel" in which the old feudalism and the new industrialism are brought into contrast and somewhat into conflict; the solution is significant, for it gives the most satisfying victory to their alliance, — the young nobleman who has thrown over aristocratic bumptiousness and narrowness for an industrial life, while retaining its high spirit, high honor, and refinement; honest commonplace trade comes next, while the narrow, unbending, unprogressive aristocracy is thrown out altogether. His next great novel, "The Lost Manuscript," has a special rather than a general moral, — that scholars should not be so buried in books as to neglect their wives. The idle nobility, however, is the villain of this book also. It is too prolix and digressive; but it has a side merit of great excellence, that of describing university life from the professor's standpoint instead of the student's, which has been nauseously overdone. Freytag also published six volumes of studies on the development of the German people, disguised as historical novels, and of great merit as studies rather than novels; each has a separate name, but the whole series is entitled "Die Ahnen" (Our Ancestors). He wrote also among other things "The Technique of the Drama" (1863), "The Crown Prince and the German Imperial Crown" (1889, after Frederick III.'s death), and a short autobiography.]

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

COLONEL BERG, retired.	BLUMENBERG, editor, }	<i>The</i>
IDA, his daughter.	SCHMOCK, of the staff, }	<i>Coriolanus.</i>
ADELHEID RONECK, country heiress.	PIEPENBRINK, wine merchant and	
SENDEN, country gentleman.	elector.	
Professor OLDENDORF, editor,	LOTTE, his wife.	
KONRAD BOLZ, editor,	BERTHA, their daughter.	
BELLMAUS, KAMPE, <i>The Union.</i>	KLEINMICHEL, citizen and elector.	
KÖRNER, of the staff,	FRITZ, his son.	
Printer HENNING, pro-	Counselor SCHWARZ.	
prietor,	KORB, secretary of Adelheid's estate.	
MÜLLER, factotum,	KARL, servant of the Colonel.	
	A foreign danseuse; waiter.	

Scene of action : Capital of a province.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Garden drawing-room in the COLONEL'S house. Rich decorations. In the middle of the rear wall an open door; beyond, a veranda and the garden. Large windows in the rear wall. Doors right and left; at right in foreground, a window.

IDA sits in foreground at right, reading. The COLONEL enters by middle door, in his hand an open box containing dahlias.

Colonel — Ida, here are the new kinds of dahlias our gardener has grown. You must find names for them. Put your mind to it. The horticultural society meets day after to-morrow, and I am going to exhibit our new species and give out their names.

Ida — This bright one we'll call "Adelheid."

Colonel — "Adelheid Runeck," of course! — Your own name mustn't be used, for you've already been known a long time to the florists as Little Dahlia.

Ida — One we'll name after your favorite author, "Boz."

Colonel — Capital, and that must be a glorious one; this yellow one with violet spikes. And the third, how shall we christen that?

Ida [*holding out her hand to her father imploringly*] — "Edward Oldendorf."

Colonel — What? The Professor? The editor? No, that won't do. — It was bad enough for him to take the editorship; but now his letting the party wheedle him into standing for deputy to the Chambers — I can't forgive him that.

Ida — Here he comes himself!

Colonel [aside] — Once it was a pleasure to hear his foot-step, but now I have to hold myself in whenever I see him, so as not to be uncivil.

Enter OLDENDORF.

Oldendorf — Good morning, Colonel.

Ida [pleasantly] — Good morning, Oldendorf. Help me admire the new dahlias father has raised.

Colonel — Don't bother the Professor. Such frivolity is not for him now : he has greater things in his head.

Oldendorf — Anyhow, I haven't become incapable of enjoying what gives you pleasure.

Colonel [muttering aside] — You haven't exactly proved that to me : I'm afraid you take pleasure in doing what makes me angry. [*Aloud.*] Are you very busy over your campaign, Mr. Would-be Representative?

Oldendorf — You know, Colonel, that I have very little to do with it myself.

Colonel — I think you have, though. It's the regular thing in such campaigns to pay court to influential persons and shake hands with voters, make speeches, scatter promises around, and all that sort of fol-de-rol.

Oldendorf — You don't believe, Colonel, that I would do anything unworthy?

Colonel — No? — I am not sure, Oldendorf. Since you have become a journalist, edit your *Union*, and show the state every day how badly it is governed — since then you are no longer your old self.

Oldendorf [who till now has been looking at the flowers with IDA ; turning to the COLONEL] — Is there anything I say or write now that contradicts my earlier views? You can hardly convince me of that. And still less can you have noticed a change in my feeling and behavior toward you.

Colonel [stubbornly] — That would be quite right now. — I'm not going to spoil my day with quarreling. Ida may see whether she gets along any better with you. I am going to see to my flowers. [*Takes the box. Exit to the garden.*]

Oldendorf — What's your father out of temper about? Has anything in the paper offended him again?

Ida — I don't think so. But it irritates him to know that you are ~~entering~~ entering politics again as an advocate of measures he detests and assailant of institutions he reveres. [*Timidly.*] Oldendorf, isn't it possible for you to withdraw from the contest?

Oldendorf — It is impossible.

Ida — I would keep you here, and father could regain his good humor, for he would appreciate very highly the sacrifice you would be making for him. Then we might hope our future would be as peaceful as the past was.

Oldendorf — I know that, *Ida*, and I feel anything but joy in the prospect of becoming representative of this city, and yet I cannot withdraw.

Ida [*turning away*] — Father is right: since editing the newspaper you have become another man.

Oldendorf — *Ida*! You too? If this bad blood is to separate us, I shall be wretched indeed.

Ida — Dear Edward! — I am only sorry I shall have to do without you so long.

Oldendorf — I am not elected yet! If I should become a deputy, and things went well with me, I would take you to the capital, so you should never leave my side again.

Ida — O Edward, we must not think of that now. Only be considerate with father.

Oldendorf — You hear me stand a good deal from him. And I don't give up hope that he will become reconciled to me. When this election is over, I will appeal to his heart once more. Perhaps I shall win a favorable answer and our union.

Ida — But you must be very attentive to his little hobbies. If he is in the garden at his dahlia bed, you must be enthusiastic over the variety of colors. If you manage *very* cleverly, perhaps he will name one Edward Oldendorf yet. We have talked it over already. Come! [*Both go out.*]

SENDEN, BLUMENBERG, KARL, SCHMOCK *at door.*

Senden [*entering*] — Is the Colonel alone?

Karl — Professor Oldendorf is with him.

Senden — Announce us. [*KARL goes out.*] Always this Oldendorf! Look here, Blumenberg, the old gentleman's connection with the *Union* must come to an end. He doesn't belong entirely to us so long as the Professor comes and goes here. We need the Colonel's personal influence —

Blumenberg — And his house is the finest in town, the best company, good wine and art.

Senden — Besides, I have my private reasons for winning the Colonel to our side; and the Professor and his clique are in the way everywhere.

Blumenberg — This friendship is going to end. I promise you it shall taper off to an end this week. The first step is taken. The gentlemen of the *Union* have walked into the trap.

Senden — What trap?

Blumenberg — The one I've set for them in our paper. [*Turning to SCHMOCK, who stands at the door.*] What are you standing here for, Schmock? Can't you wait at the gate?

Schmock — I've gone wherever you have. Why shouldn't I stand here? I know the Colonel as well as you.

Blumenberg — Don't be forthputting, and don't be insolent. Go and wait at the gate, and when I bring you the article, hurry with it to the printing-office quick. Do you understand?

Schmock — Why shouldn't I understand when you squawk like a magpie? [*Exit.*]

Blumenberg [*to SENDEN*] — He is a vulgar man, but he is useful! — Now we are alone, listen. The other day when you introduced me here, I begged and prayed the Colonel to write down, just for once, his opinions on the news of the day.

Senden — Oh dear, yes! You daubed on the flattery crudely enough, but still the old gentleman took fire.

Blumenberg — We begged him to read what he had written. He read it, and we praised it.

Senden — It was very tedious, though.

Blumenberg — I have begged it of him for our paper.

Senden — Oh dear! and now I'll have to carry big articles to your printing-office. These essays are too heavy. They are no good for the *Coriolanus*.

Blumenberg — And yet I've published them gladly. When a man writes for a paper, he becomes a good friend of that paper. The Colonel immediately subscribed for the *Coriolanus*, and asked me to dine with him the next day.

Senden [*shrugging his shoulders*] — If that's all the profit —!

Blumenberg — It's only the beginning. The articles *are* stodgy — why shouldn't I say so?

Senden — That's God's truth!

Blumenberg — And no one knows who the writer is.

Senden — The old gentleman wanted it so. I believe he is afraid of Oldendorf.

Blumenberg — So things have turned out as I expected. Oldendorf's paper attacked this article to-day. Here's the latest *Union*.

Senden — Let's see it. — This will be a famous scrimmage ! Is the attack rough ?

Blumenberg — The Colonel will certainly consider it rough. Don't you think that will help us against the Professor ?

Senden — On my honor, you are the slyest devil that ever crept out of an ink-bottle.

Blumenberg — Give it here, the colonel is coming.

Enter the COLONEL.

Colonel — Good morning, gentlemen ! [*Aside.*] And Oldendorf is right here : if he'll only stay in the garden now ! — Well, Mr. Editor, how is the *Coriolanus* getting along ?

Blumenberg — Our readers admire the new articles signed with the arrow. Perhaps I may hope that something more —

Colonel [*drawing manuscript from his pocket, and glancing through it*] — I rely upon your discretion. I really wanted to read it through once more on account of the syntax.

Blumenberg — You can do that best in the proof.

Colonel — I think it will answer. Take it, but keep quiet about it. —

Blumenberg — Allow me to send it to the printing-office at once. [*At the door.*] Schmock !

SCHMOCK *appears at the door, takes the manuscript, and rushes away.*

Senden — Blumenberg holds the paper stanchly, but he has enemies : he must be cunning of fence.

Colonel [*amused*] — Enemies ? Who hasn't some ! But you journalists have nerves like women. Everything stirs you up ; every word anybody says against you sets you wild. Get out : you are a thin-skinned lot.

Blumenberg — Perhaps you are right, Colonel, but when we have an opponent like this *Union* —

Colonel — Yes, the *Union*, it's a thorn in the sides of both of you. There's lots in it I don't like ; but in the call to arms, in the attack, in the charge, it is cleverer than your paper. The articles are witty ; even when they are wrong, you have to laugh over them.

Blumenberg — Not always. In to-day's attack on the best article the *Coriolanus* has brought out for a long time, I can see no wit at all.

Colonel — Attack on which article ?

Blumenberg — On yours, Colonel. I must have the paper with me. [*Searches for and gives him a copy of the Union.*]

Colonel — Oldendorf's journal attacks my essay! [*Reads.*]
 "We pity such ignorance" —

Blumenberg — And here —

Colonel — "It is an unpardonable presumption." What, I presuming!

Blumenberg — And here —

Colonel — "One may question whether the artlessness of the contributor is comical or sad; at any rate, he has no right to put in his oar —" [*Throwing the paper away.*] Oh, that is contemptible! These are mere vulgarities.

IDA and OLDENDORF enter from the garden.

Senden — Now the storm breaks.

Colonel — Professor, your paper is making progress. To base principles is now added something else — vulgarity.

Ida [*frightened*] — Father!

Oldendorf — Colonel, what right have you to use such offensive language?

Colonel [*holding out the paper to him*] — Look here! That appears in your paper. In *your* paper, Oldendorf!

Oldendorf — The manner of attack is not quite as cool as I could have wished —

Colonel [*interrupting him*] — Not quite as cool! Really?

Oldendorf — In the matter itself, the attack is just.

Colonel — Sir, how dare you tell me that?

Ida — Father!

Oldendorf — Colonel, I don't understand this frame of mind, and I beg you to stop and consider that we are speaking before witnesses.

Colonel — Don't ask any consideration. It was for you to have shown some consideration for the man whose friendship you used to make so much claim on.

Oldendorf — First of all, be frank enough to tell me what connection you have with the assailed article in the *Coriolanus*?

Colonel — Oh, a very casual one, too insignificant for you to care about. I merely wrote it.

Ida — Oh, heavens!

Oldendorf [*sharply*] — You? An article in this man's paper?

Ida [weeping] — Oldendorf !

Oldendorf [more calmly] — The *Union* has not attacked you, but an unknown person, who to us was nothing more than a partisan of this gentleman. You would have spared us both this painful scene if you had not concealed from me the fact that you were a correspondent of the *Coriolanus*.

Colonel — You will have to put up with my not making you a confidant of my affairs any further. You have given me a printed proof of your friendship that doesn't make me long for others.

Oldendorf [taking his hat] — And I can only explain that. I deeply regret the circumstance, but feel entirely blameless. I hope, Colonel, that on reflecting calmly, you will come to the same conclusion. Good-bye, *Ida* : my regards.

[Starts for middle door.]

Ida [weeping] — Father, don't let him leave us so !

Colonel — It is better than if he stayed.

Enter ADELHEID in stylish traveling dress ; reaches the door at the same time with OLDENDORF.

Adelheid — Not so fast, Professor !

[OLDENDORF kisses her hand, and goes out.]

Ida } [together] — *Adelheid* ! [Rushes into her arms.]
Colonel } — *Adelheid* ! and just at this time !

Adelheid [keeping hold of *Ida* and extending her hand to the COLONEL] — Give your hand to your country girl. My aunt sends greeting, and *Rosedale Estate* commends itself humbly in its brown autumn dress. The fields are empty, and in the garden the dry leaves dance in the wind. — Ah, Mr. Von *Senden* !

Colonel [introducing] — Editor *Blumenberg* !

Senden — We are delighted to welcome our sprightly farm mistress to the city.

Adelheid — And we should have been glad to meet our neighbor proprietor often in the country.

Colonel — He has a great deal to do here ; he is a great politician and works hard for good causes.

Adelheid — Yes indeed, we read of his doings in the paper. I drove through your farm yesterday. Your potato crop isn't harvested yet ; your overseer isn't through.

Senden — The *Rosedale* people have the privilege of getting through eight days earlier than everybody else.

Adelheid — To make up for it, we understand nothing but our farming. [*Pleasantly.*] The neighborhood sends you greeting.

Senden — Thank you. We do not grudge you friends with a better claim on you; but grant me an audience to-day, so I can ask you the news of our district. [*ADELHEID courtesies.*]

Senden — Good-bye, Colonel. [*To IDA.*] My respects, Miss Ida. [*Exit with BLUMENBERG.*]

Ida [*embracing ADELHEID*] — I have you! It will all come out right now!

Adelheid — What will come out right? Is there something that isn't right? Somebody out there passed me quicker than he used to, and here I see wet eyes and a wrinkled brow. [*Kisses her on the eyes.*] You mustn't spoil your pretty eyes. And do you, my esteemed friend, show me a friendly face.

Colonel — Stay the winter with us: it is the first you have given for a long time. We shall try to deserve this favor.

Adelheid [*earnestly*] — It is the first winter since my father's death that I have had the pleasure of mingling with the world again. Besides, I have business here. You know I came of age this summer, and our legal friend, counselor Schwarz, demands my presence. Listen, Ida, the servants are unpacking my luggage. Go and see to things! [*Aside.*] And hold a wet cloth to your eyes: anybody can see you've been crying. [*IDA goes out at the right; ADELHEID walks quickly up to the COLONEL.*] What is the trouble with Ida and the Professor?

Colonel — There's a good deal to tell. I won't spoil my pleasure with it now. Things don't go right with us men: our opinions are too different.

Adelheid — But weren't your opinions different before? And yet your relations with Oldendorf were so pleasant.

Colonel — They were not as different, though.

Adelheid — And which of you has changed?

Colonel — Hm! Why, he, of course. He is too easily misled by the low crowd around him. There are several men, journalists on his paper, particularly a certain Bolz.

Adelheid [*aside*] — What's this I have to hear?

Colonel — But you know him well yourself. He comes from your district.

Adelheid — He is a Rosedale boy.

Colonel — I remember. Your late father, my brave general, couldn't bear him.

Adelheid — At least he said so at times.

Colonel — This Bolz has grown eccentric since then. They say he leads an irregular life, and his manners seem to me rather too free. He is Oldendorf's evil genius.

Adelheid — That would be sad indeed. No, I don't believe that.

Colonel — What don't you believe, *Adelheid*?

Adelheid [*smiling*] — I don't believe in evil geniuses. Whatever has gone wrong between you and Oldendorf can be set right again. To-day enemies, to-morrow friends, is the saying in politics. But *Ida*'s feelings won't change so quickly. Colonel, I've brought a lovely dress pattern with me, and that new dress I'm going to wear this winter as bridesmaid.

Colonel — There's no use thinking of it. I won't let myself be caught, my girl. I am carrying the war into the enemy's country. But why do you drive others to the altar, when you've lived to see your whole neighborhood jokingly call you the Sleeping Beauty and the spinster farmer?

Adelheid [*laughing*] — Yes, so they do.

Colonel — The richest heiress in the whole country round, besieged by a host of suitors, and shut so tight against every feeling : no one can account for it !

Adelheid — Dear Colonel, if our young men were as lovable as some others — Ah, but they are not.

Colonel — You shan't get away from me. We'll hold you fast in the city till we find one of our young men here you think worthy of enlisting under your command ; — for whoever you choose for a husband, it will be with him as it is with me, — in the end he'll always have to do as you say.

Adelheid [*quickly*] — Will you do as I say about *Ida* and the Professor? Now I'm holding *you* fast.

Colonel — Will you do me the favor of choosing a husband among us this winter? Yes? Now I've caught *you*.

Adelheid — It's a bargain! your hand on it! [*Holds out her hand to him.*]

Colonel [*shaking it, laughing*] — That was a case of outwitting. [*Goes out through the middle door.*]

Adelheid — I think not! Aha, Mr. Konrad Bolz : is that your reputation among people? You live irregularly? You keep fast company? You are an evil genius?

Enter KORB from the middle door, with a bundle.

Korb — Where shall I carry the account books and papers to, Miss Runeck?

Adelheid — To my room. One moment, my dear Korb: did you find your room here in order?

Korb — Most beautiful. The servants have put in two stearine candles for me. It is pure extravagance.

Adelheid — You shall not touch a pen for me this whole day: I want you to look about the city and call on your acquaintances. You have acquaintances here, of course?

Korb — Not many. I have not been here for more than a year.

Adelheid [*indifferently*] — Aren't there some Rosedalers here?

Korb — Four³ of the soldiers are from our village. There is a John Lutz, of the Gray-Nag Lutzes —

Adelheid — I know. Is there no one else here you know from the village?

Korb — No one else. Except of course him —

Adelheid — Except him? Who is that?

Korb — Why, our Konrad.

Adelheid — To be sure, he. You'll call on him, won't you? I think you have always been good friends.

Korb — Shall I call upon him? My first walk is to him. I have been hugging myself over it all the way. There is a true soul the village may well be proud of.

Adelheid [*warmly*] — Yes, he has a true heart!

Korb [*enthusiastically*] — Always jolly and always friendly. And how attached he is to the village! Poor man, it is so long since he has been there.

Adelheid — Don't speak of it!

Korb — He will ask me all about the farm —

Adelheid [*eagerly*] — And about the horses. The old sorrel he liked to ride is still alive.

Korb — And about the shrubbery he planted with you.

Adelheid — Especially the lilac where my arbor stands now: be sure and tell him about that.

Korb — And about the pond. Thirty-six hundred carp.

Adelheid — And five dozen tench, don't forget that. And the old carp with the copper ring on his body that he put around came out at the last catch, and we put him back again.

Korb — And what questions he'll ask about you, Miss Ru-neck !

Adelheid — Tell him I am well.

Korb — And how you manage the farm since the general's death ; and that you take his paper, which I afterwards read to the farm people.

Adelheid — You needn't tell him just that. [*Sighing aside.*] I shall find out nothing in this way. [*Gravely, after a pause.*] Listen, dear Korb, I have heard various things about Mr. Bolz that astonished me. They say he lives a very wild life.

Korb — Yes, he always was a wild colt.

Adelheid — And that he spends more money than he earns.

Korb — Yes, very likely. But he spends it like a good fellow, I am dead sure.

Adelheid [*aside*] — I can get no comfort out of him either. [*Indifferently.*] Now he has a good position, won't he soon be looking for a wife ?

Korb — A wife ? — No, he won't do that. It isn't possible.

Adelheid — I have heard something of the sort, anyway. At least he is said to be very much interested in a young lady ; people talk about it.

Korb — That would be — No, I don't believe it. [*Hastily.*] But I'll ask him about it right away.

Adelheid — He will be the last one to tell you about it himself : such things are learned from a man's friends and acquaintances. — Still, the village people do know when a Rose-daler is married.

Korb — I must really get to the bottom of this.

Adelheid — You must go about it very cunningly. You know how sly he is.

Korb — Oh, I'll get around him easily enough. I'll find out something, at any rate.

Adelheid — Go on, my dear Korb ! [*Exit KORB.*] That was sad news which the Colonel brought me. Konrad immoral, worthless ! It is impossible. A noble character cannot change so. I don't believe a word of all they tell me about him.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

Scene : Editorial room of the "Union." Doors in the middle and at both sides. In the left foreground a work-table with news-

papers and manuscripts. At the right a similar smaller table, and chairs.

BOLZ enters from side door at right, then MÜLLER by middle door.

Bolz [*eagerly*] — Müller ! Factotum ! Where is the mail matter ?

Müller [*briskly, with a bundle of letters and newspapers*] — Here's the mail, Mr. Bolz, — and here's the proof of this evening's issue, just off the press, to revise.

Bolz [*at table on left, hastily opening letters, glancing through and penciling them*] — I've revised it already, you old scamp.

Müller — Not all of it. Here's the miscellany still left at the bottom, that Mr. Bellmaus gave out to the compositors.

Bolz — Let's see it ! [*Reads paper.*] “Washing stolen from the ground — Triplets born — Concert, concert, society meeting, theater — Everything in order — New invention in locomotives — The big sea-serpent seen.” [*Jumping up.*] Thunder, here he is again with the old sea-serpent ! I wish it was cooked into jelly for him and he had to eat it up cold. [*Hurries to the door at the right.*] Bellmaus, sea-monster, come out here !

BELLMAUS enters from right, pen in hand.

Bellmaus — What's the matter ? What's all this row about ?

Bolz [*solemnly*] — Bellmaus, when we did you the honor to intrust you with getting up miscellaneous stuff for this rag, we had no idea you'd waltz the everlasting big sea-serpent through the columns of our paper. What made you put in that played-out lie again ?

Bellmaus — It just fitted. We were six lines short.

Bolz — That's an excuse, but not a good one. Invent your own stories : what are you a journalist for ? Write a little “communication,” as for instance a meditation on human life in general or the dogs' roaming the street ; or think up some blood-curdling story, say an assassination out of politeness, or how a marmot bit seven sleeping children to death, or something of that sort. There's so much that happens, and so frightfully much that doesn't happen, that an honest newspaper man needn't ever lack for news.

Bellmaus — Give it here : I'll change it. [*Goes to the table, looks over a printed sheet, clips out a piece with large shears, and pastes it on the copy of the paper.*]

Bolz — That's right, my boy ; do that and reform. [*Opening the door at the right.*] *Kämpe*, can you come in here a minute? [*To MÜLLER, who is waiting at the door.*] Hurry this revise to press.

[*MÜLLER takes the sheet from BELLMAUS, and makes off.*

Enter KÄMPE.

Kämpe — I can't write anything straight when you are kicking up such a row.

Bolz — Well, what have you been writing just now, then? At the best, I suppose, a love letter to a danseuse or an order to your tailor.

Bellmaus — No, he writes tender missives. He is dead in love, for he took me on a moonlight walk last evening, and turned up his nose at all kinds of liquors.

Kämpe [*who has seated himself comfortably*] — Gentlemen, it isn't fair to call a man away from work to make such cheap jokes.

Bolz — Ah, yes, he evidently libels you when he asserts that you love something besides your new shoes and your own person a little bit. Your own nature is a love-radiator, little *Bellmaus*. You glow like a fumigating pastil every time you see a young lady : you meander round her, all glimmer and smoke, and yet you haven't the courage to speak to her once. — But we must make allowances for him, because he's always been a lyric poet by nature ; that's why he is bashful. He blushes before women, and he's capable of fine ebullitions yet.

Bellmaus — I don't want my verses forever thrown up to me. Have I ever read them to you?

Bolz — No, thank the Lord, you never had the impudence. [*Sternly.*] Come, to business, you men ! To-day's number is ready. *Oldendorf* isn't here yet : meantime, let's hold a council of war. *Oldendorf* *must* be the city deputy to the next Chambers ; our party and the *Union* must see to that. How is our stock to-day?

Kämpe — As good as possible. Our opponents admit that no other candidate would be so dangerous to them, and our friends everywhere have the highest hopes. But you know how little that means. Here's the list of voters. Our campaign committee sends word that our estimates were correct. Of the hundred voters of the city, forty are sure for us ; almost exactly the same number are on the opposite party's list ; the

other twenty or so are uncertain. It is evident the election will go by a very small majority.

Bolz — Of course we shall have that majority — a majority of eight or ten: tell it so everywhere with the utmost confidence. Any number of the floaters will side with us when they hear we are the stronger. Where is the list of the doubtful? [*Examines it.*]

Kämpe — I have made marks where, in our friends' opinion, a pull can be worked.

Bolz — After one name here I see two crosses: what does that mean?

Kämpe — That is Piepenbrink, the wine merchant Piepenbrink. He has a big following in his ward, and they say he controls five or six votes of his crowd.

Bolz — We must have him. What kind of a man is he?

Kämpe — They say he is very crusty, and doesn't bother himself about politics.

Bellmaus — But he has a pretty daughter.

Kämpe — What good is his pretty daughter? I'd rather he had an ugly wife: we could get at him easier then.

Bellmaus — He has that, too: a woman with little curls, and blazing red ribbons on her hood.

Bolz — Wife or no wife, the man must be ours. — Keep still — somebody's coming: that's Oldendorf's step. He needn't know anything about our talk. Go to your room, you fellows: the rest this evening.

Kämpe [*at the door*] — It's understood, I suppose, that in the next number I pitch into the new correspondent of the *Coriolanus* again, the arrow man?

Bolz — Oh, certainly. Go for him in a high-and-mighty way, but hard. A little set-to with our opponents is very useful just now before election, and the arrow articles are very vulnerable.

[*KÄMPE and BELLMAUS go out.*]

Enter OLDENDORF through middle door.

Oldendorf — Good day, Konrad.

Bolz [*at the table at right, over the voting-list*] — Blessed be your entrance! There's the correspondence: nothing important.

Oldendorf — Have you needed me here to-day?

Bolz — No, my jewel, this evening's paper is ready, and Kämpe is writing the leader for to-morrow.

Oldendorf — What on?

Bolz — Little outpost skirmish with the *Coriolanus*. Once more against the unknown correspondent with the arrow who has attacked our party. But don't worry, I've told Kämpe to make the article dignified, very dignified.

Oldendorf — Not for anything! The article must not be written.

Bolz — I don't understand you. What are a man's political opponents for if he can't lather them?

Oldendorf — See here, these articles are written by the Colonel: he told me so to-day himself.

Bolz — Thunderation!

Oldendorf [*gloomily*] — You may guess the confession was accompanied by other intimations that make my posture toward the Colonel and his household very awkward just now.

Bolz [*with concern*] — And what does the Colonel want you to do?

Oldendorf — He will be reconciled with me if I resign the editorship of the paper and withdraw from the candidacy.

Bolz — The devil! That isn't asking much.

Oldendorf — I suffer under these discords. I can say that to you, my friend.

Bolz [*going to him, and pressing his hand*] — Solemn moment of manly emotion!

Oldendorf — Now don't be a clown, at least. You can imagine how painful my position in the Colonel's house has become. The worthy old gentleman either cold or angry, the conversation spiced with cutting allusions, Ida suffering — I often see she has been crying. If our party beats and I am city deputy, I fear it takes away every hope of my marrying Ida.

Bolz [*eagerly*] — And if you withdraw, our party suffers a grievous loss. [*Rapidly and emphatically.*] The coming session of the Chambers will be momentous for the state. The parties are almost equal. Every ballot lost is a misfortune to our cause. In this city we have no candidate but you whose popularity is great enough to make his election probable. If you withdraw for any reason whatever, our opponents will win.

Oldendorf — Unfortunately, it's as you say.

Bolz [*still fervidly*] — I will not speak of the confidence I place in your talent; though I am convinced that in the Chamber, and perhaps as member of the government, you will be useful to the country. I beg you now to think only of the

duty you owe to our political friends, who rely on you, to this paper, and to us — we who have worked hard for three years that the name Oldendorf, which stands at the head of the paper, might gain recognition. It concerns your honor, and each moment of vacillation on your part would be a wrong.

Oldendorf [with reserve] — You are getting excited for nothing. I too consider it a wrong to withdraw now, when they tell me I am necessary to our cause. But when I confess to you, my friend, that the resolution costs me a heavy sacrifice, I am not harming either our cause or us two by it.

Bolz [soothingly] — You are quite right. You are a true comrade. And so peace, friendship, courage! Your old Colonel can't be irreconcilable.

Oldendorf — He has got hand in glove with Senden, who flatters him in every way, and I fear has plans which closely concern me too. I should be still more anxious if I didn't know I had a good advocate in the Colonel's house at present: Adelheid Runeck has just arrived.

Bolz — Adelheid Runeck? The last straw! [*Hurriedly calling through door at right.*] Kämpe, the article against the knight with the arrow will *not* be written. Do you understand?

Kämpe [appearing at door, pen in hand] — Then what will be written?

Bolz — Hanged if I know. See here, maybe I can persuade Oldendorf to write to-morrow's leader himself. But anyway you must have something ready.

Kämpe — Well, what?

Bolz [excitedly] — Write about Australian emigration, for all I care. Surely that won't stir up any bad blood.

Kämpe — Good. Shall I encourage or discountenance it?

Bolz [quickly] — Discountenance it, of course. We need all the people who are willing to work in our own country. Describe Australia as a wretched hole, — truthfully throughout, but as black as possible. How the kangaroo, rolled up in a ball, springs with irresistible malignancy at the head of the settler, while the ornithorhynchus grabs him by the legs behind; how the gold hunter in cold weather has to stand up to his neck in salt water, while in summer he hasn't a drop to drink for three months, and if he lives through all that he will finally be devoured by thievish natives. Make it very vivid, and at the end quote the latest market price of Australian wool

from the *Times*. You'll find what books you need in the library. [*Slams the door.*]

Oldendorf [*at the table*] — Do you know Miss Runeck? In her letters to Ida she often asks about you.

Bolz — Is that so? Yes indeed, I know her. We are from the same village, — she from the manor, I from the parsonage; my father taught us together. Oh yes, I know her!

Oldendorf — How does it happen you've become such strangers? You never speak of her.

Bolz — Hm! There are old histories, family quarrels, Montagues and Capulets. I haven't seen her for a long time.

Oldendorf [*smiling*] — I hope politics haven't separated you too.

Bolz — Politics certainly had a hand in our separation. — You see it is a universal misfortune that friendship is destroyed by political life.

Oldendorf — It is deplorable! In matters of faith every cultivated man will tolerate others' beliefs; but in politics we treat each other as scoundrels because one man is colored a few shades different from his neighbor.

Bolz [*aside*] — Subject for the next article. [*Aloud.*] — is colored different from his neighbor: my idea precisely. That will have to be said in our paper. [*Entreatingly.*] Look here, some such virtuous little article as this: Exhortation to our voters; Respect our opponents, — for they are still our brothers! [*Still more entreatingly.*] *Oldendorf*, that would be something for you. There's virtue and humanity in that theme; the writing would divert you, and you owe the paper an article on account of that forbidden feud. Do me that favor! Write it there in the back room; nobody shall disturb you.

Oldendorf [*smiling*] — You are a base wire-puller.

Bolz [*forcing him out of the chair*] — Please: you'll find paper and ink there. Come, my treasure, come. [*Accompanies him to the door at left; exit OLDENDORF. — BOLZ, calling in.*] Will you have a cigar? An old Ugues? [*Takes a cigar case from his pocket.*] No? — Only don't write too little: it's to be a leading article! [*Shuts the door. Calls in at door on right.*] The Professor is writing the article himself: take care nobody disturbs him. [*Coming forward.*] That ought to settle that. — Adelheid here in the city! — I'll go straight off and see her. — Hold up: always rather cold-blooded. You, my old *Bolz*, are no longer the brown lad from the pastor's

garden, and even if you were, *she* has long ago become a different girl. The grass has grown over the grave of a certain childish fancy. What are you drumming away all at once so uneasily for, old heart? Here in the city she is just as far away from you as on her estate. [*Sitting down, toying with a pencil.*] Nothing like cold blood! murmured the salamander as he sat in the fire.

Enter KORB.

Korb — Is Mr. Bolz to be found here?

Bolz [*jumping up*] — *Korb*! my dear *Korb*! Welcome, heartily welcome! It is fine that you haven't forgotten me. [*Shaking his hand.*] I am very glad to see you.

Korb — And I more! — Here we are in the city! The whole village sends regards! From Tony the horse boy — he is overseer now — to the old night watchman, whose horn you hung on the steeple that time. Ah, what fun!

Bolz — How is the young mistress? Tell me, old fellow.

Korb — First-rate now. But things have gone badly with us. Four years the late general was sick; that was a hard time. You know he was always an irritable man.

Bolz — Yes, he was hard to manage.

Korb — And especially in his illness. But Miss Adelheid nursed him; gentle as a lamb, and at the end as white as one. Now he is dead she manages the farm alone, and as well as the best farmer; so there are good times in the village again. I'll tell you everything, but not till this evening: she's waiting for me, and I just skipped over to tell you we are here.

Bolz — Don't hurry off so, *Korb*. — So the people in the village still think of me?

Korb — I should think so! No man can understand why you don't come back to us. — As long as the old gentleman was alive it was somewhat another thing, of course; but now —

Bolz [*sadly*] — My parents are dead, and a stranger is living in the parsonage.

Korb — But we are still living at the manor! The mistress would certainly be glad —

Bolz — Does she still remember me?

Korb — Of course. She was asking after you this very day.

Bolz — What about, old fellow?

Korb — She asked me if it was true, as people say, that

you've got gay, run into debt, chase petticoats, and are up to all kinds of deviltry.

Bolz — O Lord ! Did you stand up for me ?

Korb — Of course ! I told her all that goes without saying, in your case.

Bolz — Curse it ! — So that's the idea she has of me. — Look here, Korb, — Miss Adelheid has a good many suitors ?

Korb — The sands of the sea are nothing in comparison.

Bolz [*irritably*] — She can't pick but one, when it comes to that.

Korb [*slyly*] — Just so ! But who ? that's the question.

Bolz — Whom do you think ?

Korb — Well, that's hard to say. There's this Von Senden, who is living in the city now. If any one has a prospect, it's likely to be he. He's as busy around us as a weasel. Just now, as I was coming out, he sends us in a whole dozen tickets for the big club reception. It must be a club where people of rank go arm in arm with the citizens.

Bolz — Yes, it is a political society that Senden is director of. It's casting a big net for voters. And the Colonel and the ladies will go ?

Korb — So I hear ; I got a ticket too.

Bolz [*aside*] — Has it come to this ? Poor Oldendorf ! — And Adelheid at Von Senden's club reception !

Korb [*aside*] — How in the world am I to get at the inwardness of his love affairs ? [*Aloud.*] Oh, say, Mr. Konrad, one thing more. Perhaps you have some very good friend in the establishment here that you could recommend me to ?

Bolz — What for, old fellow ?

Korb — Merely — I am a stranger in the place, and often have commissions and errands where I am all at sea ; and so I might have somebody here I could get information from if you didn't happen to be in, or could leave things for you with.

Bolz — You'll find me in pretty much all day. [*At the door.*] Bellmaus ! [*BELLMAUS comes in.*] Take a good look at this gentleman : he is a fine old friend of mine, from my native village. Any time he doesn't find me in, you act for me. — This gentleman's name is Bellmaus, and he is a square man.

Korb — Happy to make your acquaintance, Mr. Bellmaus.

Bellmaus — Same with me, Mr. — You haven't told me the name yet.

Bolz — Korb [*basket*]. From the great family of Market-

basket: he has had to carry a great deal in his day, and he has often carried me on his back too.

Bellmaus — Same with me, Mr. Korb. [*They shake hands.*]

Korb — Well, that's settled; and now I must be off, as Miss Runeck is waiting.

Bolz — Good-bye for a short time.

[*Exit KORB, exit BELLMAUS by door at right.*]

Bolz [*alone*] — So this Senden is courting her. Oh, that's bitter.

Enter hastily HENNING, in dressing-gown, a printed sheet in his hand, followed by MÜLLER.

Henning — Beg your pardon, Mr. Bolz! Is it *Konditor* or *Kanditor*? The new proof-reader has changed it to *Kanditor*.

Bolz [*thoughtfully*] — My respected Mr. Henning, the *Union* prints it *Konditor*.

Henning — I just said so. [*To MÜLLER.*] It's got to be changed back: hurry up, the press is waiting. [*Exit MÜLLER in a hurry.*] I happened to light on the leader. It's yours, of course. It's very good, but too sharp, my dear Mr. Bolz; pepper and mustard: that will give offense, it will make bad blood.

Bolz [*abstracted, angrily*] — I've always had an aversion for that man.

Henning [*hurt*] — How? What? Mr. Bolz? You have an aversion for me?

Bolz [*starting*] — Eh? for whom? — No, my dear Mr. Henning, you are a fine man, and you'd be the best of newspaper owners if you weren't a frightened rabbit so often. [*Embraces him.*] Give my respects to Mrs. Henning, and let me be alone: I am thinking up the next article.

Henning [*while being pushed out*] — Only write gently and charitably, my dear Mr. Bolz.

Bolz [*alone, walking about again*] — Senden turns out of the road for me all he can; he takes things from me that would set any other man's back up. If he should guess it —

Müller [*bolting in*] — A strange lady wishes to pay her respects.

Bolz [*hurriedly*] — A lady? for me?

Müller — For the editor. [*Hands a card.*]

Bolz [*reads*] — Leontine Pavoni-Gessler, née Melloni, from Paris. — She must be an artist. Is she pretty?

Müller — Hm! So-so.

Bolz — Then give her our regrets that we couldn't have the pleasure, as the office has a big washing to-day.

Müller — What?

Bolz [*roughly*] — Washing, children's washing; we shall be up to our elbows in soap-suds.

Müller [*laughing*] — And shall I tell her that?

Bolz [*impatiently*] — You are a putty-head. [*At the door.*] Bellmaus! [*BELLMAUS comes in.*] Stay here and receive this call. [*Gives him the card.*]

Bellmaus — Ah, that's the new dancer that was expected here. [*Inspecting his coat.*] But I haven't made any toilet.

Bolz — She'll have made all the more of one. [*To MÜLLER.*] Show the lady in! [*Exit MÜLLER.*]

Bellmaus — But I really can't —

Bolz [*fretfully*] — Confound it, don't be bashful! [*Goes to the table, locks papers in the drawer, seizes his hat.*]

Enter MADAME PAVONI.

Madame Pavoni — Have I the honor to see before me the editor of the *Union*?

Bellmaus [*bowing*] — Certainly — that is — won't you have the goodness to be seated? [*Draws up chairs.*]

Bolz — Adelheid is sharp-sighted and clever: how is it possible she doesn't see through the fellow?

Madame Pavoni — Mr. Editor, the able articles on art which adorn your paper — have prompted me —

Bellmaus — Oh, pray!

Bolz [*resolutely*] — I must get admitted to this club reception!

[*Exit, bowing to the lady.* BELLMAUS and MADAME PAVONI sit facing each other.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Scene: Same drawing-room as at beginning. In foreground at right, IDA and ADELHEID; next to ADELHEID the COLONEL, all seated. Before them a table with coffee service.

Colonel [*in conversation with ADELHEID, laughing*] — A capital story and amusingly told. I am heartily glad you are with

us, my dear Adelheid, for now there'll be something else talked about at our table besides these miserable politics! — Hm! The Professor isn't coming to-day. He never failed before, though, at the coffee hour.

[*Pause; ADELHEID and IDA look at each other. IDA sighs.*
Adelheid — Perhaps he has work on hand.

Ida — Or else he is angry with us because I am going to the reception to-night.

Colonel [peevishly] — Nonsense! You are not his wife, nor even engaged to him. You live at home with your father, and belong in my circle. — Hm! I notice he is out with me for speaking my mind awhile ago. I believe I was a little out of temper.

Adelheid [nodding her head] — Yes, I understand so, a little.

Ida — He is concerned about your frame of mind, father dear.

Colonel — Well, I have reason enough to be out of temper; don't bring it up to me. And that he still lets himself be tangled in this campaign is unpardonable. [*Walks to and fro.*]
 Send for him again, though, *Ida*. [*IDA rings.*]

Enter KARL.

Ida — Compliments to the Professor, and we are waiting the coffee for him. [*Exit KARL.*]

Colonel — Now that word "waiting" wasn't necessary. We've drunk ours already.

Adelheid — My little *Ida* hasn't.

Ida — Hush!

Adelheid — But why in the world did he consent to run? He has enough to do without that.

Colonel — Just ambitious, my dear girl. The devil of ambition gets into these young men; it drives them as the steam does the locomotive.

Ida — No, father, he hasn't thought of himself in this.

Colonel — It doesn't stand out nakedly as: "I will make a career," or, "I will become a distinguished man." It's done slicker than that. Good friends come and say: "It is your duty to the good cause to —" "It is a crime against your fatherland if you don't —" "It is a sacrifice for you, but we demand it." And then vanity will throw a fine cloak over it, and the candidate springs forward, of course from pure patriotism. You can't teach an old soldier much about the world.

We, my dear Adelheid, sit quietly, and laugh over these weaknesses.

Adelheid — And make allowances for them, if our hearts are as indulgent as yours.

Colonel — Yes, experience teaches wisdom.

Enter KARL.

Karl — Mr. Von Senden and two other gentlemen.

Colonel — What do they want? Very delightful! [*Exit KARL.*] Let me bring them in here, children. Senden never stays long: he is a restless spirit. [*The ladies rise.*]

Ida — Our hour is broken up again.

Adelheid — Never mind: we have so much more time for our toilet. [*ADELHEID and IDA go out left.*]

Enter SENDEN, BLUMENBERG, and a third gentleman.

Senden — Colonel, we come by order of the Election Committee to notify you that the Committee has unanimously decided to nominate you, Colonel, as our party's candidate.

Colonel — Me?

Senden — The committee beg you to ratify this resolution, so that the formal announcement can be made to-night at the reception to electors.

Colonel — Are you in earnest, my dear Senden? How did the committee happen to think of it?

Senden — Colonel, the president, who, according to previous arrangement, was to stand for the city, thinks he can do more good by running in one of the provincial districts; and outside of him there is no one in the city so generally known and so popular with the citizens as you. If you comply with our request, the party is sure to win; if you decline, there is the greatest probability that our opponents will have things their own way. You will agree with us that such a result must be avoided at all hazards.

Colonel — I see all that, but for personal reasons it is quite impossible for me to serve our friends in this affair.

Senden [to the others] — Let me call the Colonel's attention to something that may incline him to our wishes.

[*BLUMENBERG and the rest go out into the garden, where they are occasionally visible.*]

Colonel — But, Senden, how could you put me in this embarrassing position? You know Oldendorf has frequented my

house for years, and that it must be very unpleasant for me to publicly oppose him.

Senden — Then if the Professor really has such an attachment for you and your household, he has the best of opportunities for showing it now. It is a matter of course that he will withdraw at once.

Colonel — I am not so sure of that : he is very stubborn in some things.

Senden — If he doesn't withdraw, such egotism can hardly be called obstinacy. And in that case, you are scarcely under obligation to him ; an obligation, Colonel, which would injure the whole country. Besides, he has no chance of being elected, for you'll beat him, not by a large majority, but by a sure one.

Colonel — Are we so sure of that majority ?

Senden — I believe I can answer for it. Blumenberg and the other gentlemen have made a very close canvass.

Colonel — It would serve the Professor quite right if he had to retire in my favor. — But no — no, it can't be, though, my friend.

Senden — We know, Colonel, what a sacrifice we are asking, and that nothing could indemnify you for it but the consciousness of having done the fatherland a great service.

Colonel — To be sure.

Senden — It would be perceived at the capital, too, and I am convinced that your entrance into the Chambers would cause great rejoicing in still other circles than that of your numerous friends and admirers.

Colonel — I should meet a great many old friends and comrades there. [*Aside.*] I should be presented at court.

Senden — The Minister of War was lately inquiring after you very warmly. He must be a war comrade of yours, too.

Colonel — Yes indeed. When we were youngsters we belonged to the same company, and many a crazy lark we've had together. I should like to see how he draws his honest face into a solemn scowl in the Chambers ; in the regiment he was a wild devil, but a brave lad.

Senden — And he won't be the only one to receive you with open arms.

Colonel — I should have to think the matter over, anyhow.

Senden — Don't be angry, Colonel, if I urge you to decide as we wish: To-night we must acquaint the invited citizens

with their representative: it is the last minute, if everything isn't to be lost.

Colonel [uncertainly] — You put me in a corner.

[SENDEN from the garden door beckons the others nearer.

Blumenberg — We venture to be pressing with you because we know that so good a soldier as you, Colonel, comes to a decision quickly.

Colonel [after an inward struggle] — Well, so be it, gentlemen, I accept. Tell the committee I know how to appreciate their confidence. This evening we will discuss the details.

Blumenberg — We thank you, Colonel: the whole city will rejoice to learn of your decision.

Colonel — Till to-night, then ! [*The visitors go out ; the COLONEL alone, reflecting.*] I ought not to have accepted so quickly. — But I must oblige the Minister of War. — What will the girls say to it ; and Oldendorf ? [*Enter OLDENDORF.*] There he is himself ! [*Clears his throat.*] He'll be surprised ; I cannot help it, he must withdraw. — Good day, Professor, you are just in time.

Oldendorf [hurriedly] — Colonel, the report in the city is that Von Senden's party has nominated you : I ask you myself for the assurance that you would not accept such a candidacy.

Colonel — If the proposition were made me, why shouldn't I accept it as well as you ? Yes, rather than you, for the motives that might influence me are at all events more valid than your grounds.

Oldendorf — Then there was something in the rumor ?

Colonel — To come right out, it is the truth. I have accepted ; in me you see your opponent.

Oldendorf — This is the worst thing yet that has clouded our relations. Colonel, couldn't the remembrance of a friendship that for years was warm and untroubled keep you out of this ugly fight ?

Colonel — I could do no otherwise, Oldendorf, believe me. It rests with *you* now to remember our old friendship. You are the younger man, to say nothing of other relations : it is for you to withdraw now.

Oldendorf [more eagerly] — Colonel, I have known you for years ; I know how keenly and warmly you feel, and how little your fiery nature is suited to bear the petty daily annoyances of politics, and the irritating blows of debate. Oh, my esteemed friend, heed my entreaties and retract your consent.

Colonel — Let me take care of that myself: I am a chip of a hard old block. Think of yourself, my dear Oldendorf. You are young, you have a reputation as a scholar, your learning assures you of every kind of success. Why will you bring on yourself in another field, instead of honor and recognition, nothing but hate, derision, and neglect? For with your views you won't escape that. Bear it in mind. Be sensible and draw out.

Oldendorf — Colonel, if I could follow *my* wishes, I would do it on the spot; but I am bound to my friends in this contest, and I have no right to withdraw now.

Colonel [eagerly] — And I can't withdraw either, without injuring the good cause. So we are as far apart as when we began. [*Aside.*] Pig-headed fellow! [*Both walk up and down on different sides of the stage.*] But you have no prospects at all of being elected, Oldendorf; it is a sure thing that my friends have got the majority of the votes. You are starting out to be publicly turned down. [*Good-naturedly.*] I wouldn't want you to be beaten by me before the whole people: that would make gossip and scandal. Think it over; there's no use at all of your sending a challenge to this duel.

Oldendorf — Even if everything were as certain as you assume, Colonel, I should still have to stick to my decision. But so far as I can judge of the general feeling, the result is by no means so certain. And bear in mind, Colonel, that if you should happen to get the worst of it —

Colonel [angrily] — I tell you, it won't happen.

Oldendorf — But if it should turn out so? How ugly it would be for both of us! What feelings would you have toward me then? A defeat might perhaps be welcome to me, but to you it would be a deep mortification. And, Colonel, I am afraid of that possibility.

Colonel — The very reason you should draw out.

Oldendorf — I cannot now, but you still can.

Colonel [hotly] — Damnation, sir! I have said yes, and I am not the man to put a no on top of it. [*Both walk back and forth.*] So that ends it, I suppose, Professor. My wishes go for nothing with you; I might have known it. Each of us goes his own road. We have become public opponents, we will be honorable adversaries.

Oldendorf [grasping the COLONEL'S hand] — Colonel, I hold this day a very unfortunate one, for I see sorrow follow it.

Under all circumstances, be assured that my love and attachment for you is not to be shaken by anything.

Colonel — At last our position is like that before a battle. You want to let yourself be beaten by an old soldier. You will have your wish.

Oldendorf — I ask leave to tell Miss Ida of our conversation.

Colonel [*rather uneasily*] — Better not do that now, Professor, there'll be occasion soon enough. The ladies are making their toilet at present; I'll tell them the news myself.

Oldendorf — Good-bye, Colonel, and think of me without resentment.

Colonel — I'll do the best I can, Professor. [*Exit OLDENDORF.*] He won't give in. How much ambition that scholar has!

Enter IDA and ADELHEID.

Ida — Was not that Oldendorf's voice?

Colonel — Yes, my child.

Adelheid — And has he gone again? Has anything happened?

Colonel — Yes indeed, child. Very shortly, not Oldendorf, but I, will be representative of the city.

Adelheid } [at once] — { You, Colonel?

Ida } [at once] — { You, father?

Ida — Has Oldendorf withdrawn?

Adelheid — Is the election over?

Colonel — Neither one. Oldendorf has proved his much-vaunted attachment for us by not withdrawing, and election day isn't past yet. But from all I hear, there is no doubt Oldendorf is defeated.

Ida — And you, father, have become his opponent before all the world?

Adelheid — And what did Oldendorf say to that, Colonel?

Colonel — Don't get me hot, children! — Oldendorf was obstinate; otherwise he behaved well, and it's all right there. The motives that have decided me to make this sacrifice are very weighty; I will explain them to you some other time. The thing is settled; I have accepted: let that satisfy you for now.

Ida — But, father dear —

Colonel — Don't bother me, Ida. I've got something else to think of. This evening I shall make a public address: that's

the regular thing in such campaigns, you know. — Never mind, child, we'll manage the Professor and his crowd.

[*Exit to the garden.*]

[*IDA and ADELHEID face each other and wring their hands.*]

Ida — What do you say to that?

Adelheid — You are the daughter: what do you say?

Ida — Only think! Father! He has hardly done explaining to us carefully what thin disguises ambition puts on in such political matters —

Adelheid — Yes, he described them very clearly — all those cloaks and stalking-horses of vanity.

Ida — And the very next hour he lets the cloak be thrown over himself. It's dreadful! — And suppose father isn't elected? It was wrong of Oldendorf not to yield to father's foibles. Is that your love for me, Mr. Professor? Even he didn't think of me!

Adelheid — I'll tell you, we will wish them both thrown out. These politicians! — It was bad enough for you when only one was in politics; now, when they are both drinking of the befooling beverage, your cake is all dough for sure. If I should ever come to the point of making a man my master, I would hold him to only one condition, my old aunt's wise rule of life, — smoke tobacco as much as you like, my husband, at worst it only ruins the hangings, but don't you dare ever to look at a newspaper, for that ruins your character. [*KORB comes to the door.*] What is it, Korb?

Korb [*hurriedly and mysteriously*] — It isn't true!

Adelheid [*same*] — What isn't true?

Korb — That he is engaged, he has no fancies of the sort: his friend says he has only *one* sweetheart.

Adelheid [*eagerly*] — Who is she?

Korb — His newspaper.

Adelheid [*relieved*] — Ah-h! [*Aloud.*] So you see what a lot of lies people tell. All right, my dear Korb. [*Exit KORB.*]

Ida — What lies?

Adelheid [*sighing*] — Oh, that we women are cleverer than men: we talk just as wisely, and I'm afraid we are just as anxious to forget our wisdom at the first opportunity. We are poor sinners alike!

Ida — You can joke: you have never known what it is to have a father and a dear friend hostile to each other.

Adelheid — You think so? — But I have had a good girl

friend who had foolishly set her heart on a handsome, high-spirited young man ; she was still a child at that time, and it was a very touching situation. Knightly homage on his part, and tender sighs on hers. Then the young heroine had the misfortune to grow jealous, and she forgot poesy and propriety so far as to give her heart's chosen knight a slap in the face. It was only a very little slap, but it proved fateful. The young lady's father saw it, and demanded an explanation. Then the young knight did what a real hero must do : he took the whole blame on himself, and told the horrified father he had asked the lady for a kiss — poor fellow ! he was never so presuming ! — and got a blow for answer. The father was a strict man, and abused the youngster. The hero was banished from his family and his home, and the heroine sat alone in her castle chamber and wept for her lost one.

Ida — She ought to have told her father the truth.

Adelheid — Oh, she did, but her confession made bad worse. Since that time many years have gone by, and the knight and his lady are now old people and very sensible.

Ida [*smiling*] — And don't they love each other more because they are sensible ?

Adelheid — Dear child, I can't tell you just what the gentleman thinks. He wrote the young lady a very beautiful letter after the death of her father : beyond that I know nothing more : but the lady has more faith than you, and she still hopes on. [*Earnestly.*] Yes, she hopes, and her father allowed her to before his death. — You see, she is still hoping.

Ida [*hugging her*] — And who is the outcast one her hopes are fixed on ?

Adelheid — Hush, dear, that's a dark secret. Only a few living men know of it : and if the birds on the Rosedale trees tell each other about it, they treat the story as a dim legend of their ancestors ; then they sing softly and plaintively, and ruffle their feathers in awe. — You shall learn all in due time : for the present, put your mind on the reception and how pretty you will look.

Ida — Here the father and there the lover — how is it to end ?

Adelheid — Don't worry. One is an old soldier and the other a young statesman : we women in all ages have twisted such public characters around our little fingers. [*Both go out.*]

SCENE II.

Anteroom of a public hall. The rear wall a row of columns and pillars, through which one looks into the lighted hall and beyond into a second. In front a door at left, tables and chairs at right; chandelier; later from time to time, distant music. In the hall gentlemen and ladies standing or walking up and down in groups; SENDEN, BLUMENBERG.

Senden — All goes well. Superb spirit in the company. These good citizens are charmed with our arrangements. — That idea of the reception was a capital thought of yours, Blumenberg.

Blumenberg — Only see that the people get warmed up quickly. A little music does well to start with; Vienna dances suit the women best. Then comes a speech from you, then some songs, and at supper the introduction of the Colonel and the toasts. It can't fail: the people must have hearts of stone if they don't give their votes as thanks for such a reception.

Senden — The toasts are distributed.

Blumenberg — But the music? Why isn't the music playing?

Senden — I am waiting for the Colonel's arrival.

Blumenberg — He must be received with a flourish that will tickle him up, you know.

Senden — So it's arranged. Immediately after that a march begins, and we start him in the procession.

Blumenberg — First-rate! That makes his entrance imposing. But be thinking over your speech; be popular, for we are among the masses to-day.

Enter Guests, among them HENNING.

Senden [*doing the honors with BLUMENBERG*] — Very glad to see you here. — We knew you wouldn't fail us. — Is this your good lady?

Guest — Yes, this is my wife, Mr. Von Senden.

Senden — You with us too, Mr. Henning? Welcome, dear sir!

Henning — I was invited through my friend, and was curious. I hope my presence will not be disagreeable to any one?.

Senden—On the contrary, we are charmed to greet you here.

[*Exeunt Guests through middle door. Exit SENDEN in conversation with them.*]

Blumenberg — He knows how to manage the people. That's the good manners of these gentlemen. He is useful; he is really very useful to me: he manages the others and I manage him. [*Turning around and perceiving SCHMOCK, who is moving about the door.*] What are you doing here? What are you standing around and listening for? You are no excise toll-man. Don't stick in one spot close to me. Distribute yourself among the company.

Schmock — Who shall I go to when I've no acquaintances in the whole crowd? You are my only acquaintance.

Blumenberg — What need is there of your telling people I am an acquaintance of yours? It is no honor to me to stand next to you.

Schmock — If it's no honor, it's no disgrace either. I can go alone as well as you.

Blumenberg — Have you any money so you could get something to eat? Go to the caterer and order something on my name. The committee will pay for it.

Schmock — I won't go out to eat. I don't need to spend anything: I've eaten all I want. [*Flourish and march at a distance. Exit BLUMENBERG. SCHMOCK, alone, advancing angrily.*] I hate him; I'll tell him I hate him and despise him from the bottom of my heart. [*Turns toward him as he goes, then turns around.*] I can't tell him, though, for then he'll blue-pencil everything in the correspondence I do for his paper. I'll see if I can put up with it.

[*Exit by middle door.*]

Enter by side doors, BOLZ, KÄMPE, BELLMAUS.

Bolz [*walking in*] — Here we are in the house of the Capulet. [*Pantomime of sheathing sword.*] Hide your swords under roses, puff out your cheeks, and look as silly and innocent as possible. Above all, don't pick any quarrels; and if you meet this Tybalt, Senden, be good enough to slip out of sight. [*Polonaise seen going on in the rear halls.*] Do thou, Romeo Bellmaus, beware of the females: I see more tresses floating there and handkerchiefs fluttering there than is good for your peace of mind.

Kämpe — We wager a bottle of champagne that if any of us gets into trouble, you are the one.

Bolz — Possibly, but I promise you you'll get your share of it for certain. — Now hear my plan of campaign. You, *Kämpe* — [*Enter SCHMOCK.*] Stop, who's — Thunder! the factotum of the *Coriolanus*! Our incognito hasn't lasted long.

Schmock [*who before the last words has been seen looking in at the door; walking forward*] — I wish you a pleasant evening, Mr. *Bolz*.

Bolz — I wish you the same of still pleasanter quality, Mr. *Schmock*.

Schmock — Couldn't I speak two words with you?

Bolz — Two? Ask not too few, noble armor-bearer of the *Coriolanus*. Two dozen words shall you have, but no more.

Schmock — Couldn't you give me work on your paper?

Bolz [*to KÄMPE and BELLMAUS*] — Hear that? On our paper? Hm! thou askest much, noble Roman!

Schmock — I've had enough of the *Coriolanus*. — I'd do everything you have to do. I'd like awfully to be with square men, where a fellow gets his deserts and decent treatment.

Bolz — What desire you of us, slave of Rome? We take you from your party? No, never! We offer violence to your political convictions? Make you a turncoat? We bear the blame of your coming to our party? Never! Our conscience is tender; it rebels against your proposition.

Schmock — Why do you trouble yourself about that? I have learned with Blumenberg to write on all sides. I have written Right, and again Left; I can write in every direction.

Bolz — I see, you have character. You can't lack for it in our age. Your offer does us honor, but we cannot accept it now; such an earth-quaking event as your conversion must be maturely considered. — Meanwhile, you shall have bestowed your confidence on no unfeeling barbarian. [*Aside to the others.*] Perhaps something can be wormed out of him! — *Bellmaus*, you have the best heart of us three: you must take charge of him to-day.

Bellmaus — But how shall I begin with him?

Bolz — Take him to the refreshment room, sit down with him in a corner and ladle punch into every hole of his sorry head till his secrets spring out like wet mice. Make him gab,

especially about the election. Go, my infant, and be mighty careful you don't lose your head and chatter yourself.

Bellmaus — This way I shan't see much of the reception.

Bolz — That you will not, my son! But what is there for you in the reception? Heat, dust, and old dance music! We'll tell you all the rest in the morning; besides, you are a poet, and can imagine the whole affair much more beautifully than it is in reality. So don't fret. Your part seems a thankless one, but it's the most important of all, for it requires coolness and slickness. Go, my mouse, and beware of excitement.

Bellmaus — I will beware, dear Mr. Cat. — Come, Schmock.
[*BELLMAUS and SCHMOCK go out.*]

Bolz — We'd better separate too.

Kämpe — I am going to observe the general spirit. If I need you, I'll hunt you up.

Bolz — I mustn't show myself too much. I'll stay here within reach. [*Exit KÄMPE.*] Alone at last! [*Goes to middle door.*] There's the Colonel, surrounded by a dense crowd. — It's she! — She is here, and I must lie in cover, like a fox in the bushes! — But she has eagle eyes — so perhaps — the crowd is dispersing, she is walking with Ida arm in arm through the hall. [*Eagerly.*] She is coming nearer! [*Angrily.*] O Lord! here's Korb tearing up to me! Of all times!

Korb — Mr. Konrad, I can't believe my eyes: you here at this reception?

Bolz [*hastily*] — 'Sh, old boy, I'm not here for nothing. I can trust in you: you belong with us, you know.

Korb — Body and soul. Among all the talk and fiddling I am forever shouting inside: "Long live the *Union!*" Here it sticks [*shows a newspaper in his pocket*].

Bolz — Good enough, Korb: you can do me a great favor. Bellmaus is sitting in a corner of the refreshment room with a stranger. He's going to pump the stranger, but he can't stand much himself, and his tongue gets loose very easily. You'll do the party a great favor if you'll hurry in there and drink punch, so as to help out Bellmaus. I know from old times you are good for it.

Korb [*promptly*] — I'll go. You've got your old scheming head yet, I see. Rely on me; the stranger shall go under and the *Union* shall triumph. [*Exit swiftly. Music ceases.*]

Bolz — Poor Schmock! [*At the door.*] Ah, they are still

walking through the hall; somebody accosts Ida, and they stand there while Adelheid walks on. [*Buoyantly.*] She's coming, she's coming alone!

Adelheid [*as she passes the door, stepping quickly in; BOLZ bows*] — Konrad! My dear Doctor! [*Holds out her hand. BOLZ bows low over her hand.*] I recognized you instantly at a distance. Show me your true face! Yes, it hasn't changed much — a scar, and rather browner, and a little wrinkle at the mouth — I hope that is from laughing.

Bolz — If anything else is nearer to me just now than laughing, it is only a passing malignity of my soul. I see myself double, like a melancholy Highlander. With you my long happy childhood comes bodily before my eyes; all it brought of joy and sorrow I feel as vividly again as if I were still the boy that once sought adventures for you in the woods and caught robins. — And yet the beautiful form that I see before me is so different from the playmate, that I perceive it is only a lovely dream I am dreaming. — Your eyes shine as kindly as before, but — [*bowing slightly*] I hardly have the right to think of old dreams still.

Adelheid — Perhaps I have not altered as much myself as you think. — And however much we are both transformed, we have remained good friends, haven't we, Doctor?

Bolz — Before I give up the smallest part of the right I have to your interest, I'll write and print and distribute venomous articles against myself.

Adelheid — And yet you have grown so proud that to this very day you haven't looked up your friend in the city. Why are you such a stranger to the Colonel's house?

Bolz — I am not a stranger to it. On the contrary, I have a very respectable standing there, which I best maintain by going there as little as possible. The Colonel, and sometimes Miss Ida too, are glad to allay their indignation against Oldendorf and the paper by seeing in me the evil-doer with horns and claws. So ticklish a relation has to be handled with care; it wouldn't do for the devil to make himself common by showing himself every day.

Adelheid — But I beg you now to give up this lofty position. I am to spend the winter in the city, and I hope for the sake of your boyhood friend you will come among my friends as a citizen of this world.

Bolz — In any part you assign me.

Adelheid — Even in that of a messenger of peace between the Colonel and Oldendorf?

Bolz — If peace is only to be bought by Oldendorf's withdrawal, no — but otherwise I am ready for all good deeds.

Adelheid — And I fear peace is only to be bought for exactly that price. — You see, Mr. Konrad, even we have become opponents.

Bolz — To do anything against your will is monstrous to me, big a devil as I am. So my Saint wishes and asks that Oldendorf be not made deputy?

Adelheid — I wish and ask it, my lord devil!

Bolz — It is hard. You have so many lords in your heaven you might give Miss Ida to, why must you rob a poor devil of his only soul, the Professor?

Adelheid — The Professor and no other will I have, and you shall relinquish him to me.

Bolz — I am in despair; I would tear my hair if the locality were not so unfavorable. I fear your resentment, I tremble at the thought that this election could be displeasing to you.

Adelheid — Then try to prevent the election!

Bolz — That I cannot do; but as soon as it is over, it will be my fate to grieve over your resentment and be dejected. I will retire from the world as far as the still North Pole; there for the rest of my days will I sadly play dominoes with polar bears and diffuse among the seals the beginnings of journalistic culture. That will be easier to bear than an angry look from your eyes.

Adelheid [*laughing*] — Yes, you were always so. You promised everything in the world, and always kept the bit in your own teeth. But before you journey to the North Pole, perhaps you will try once more to be reconciled with me here. [*KÄMPE visible at the door.*] Hush! — I await your visit: good-bye, my re-found friend. [*Exit.*]

Bolz — There my good angel turns her back in a huff. Now am I irretrievably thine, thou sorceress Politics!

[*Exit in haste through the center.*]

Enter through middle door PIEPENBRINK, MRS. PIEPENBRINK, BERTHA escorted by FRITZ KLEINMICHEL, and the elder KLEINMICHEL. *Quadrille behind the scenes.*

Piepenbrink — Thank heaven, we are out of this crush.

Mrs. Piepenbrink — It is very hot.

Kleinmichel — And the music is too loud : there are too many trumpets in it, and trumpets are odious to me.

Piepenbrink — Here's a quiet place : let's sit down here.

Fritz — Bertha would like to stay in the hall : mayn't I go back with her?

Piepenbrink — I have no objection to you young people going back to the hall, but I'd rather you'd stay with us. I like to have all my party together.

Mrs. Piepenbrink — Stay with your parents, dear!

Piepenbrink — Sit down! [*To his wife.*] You sit in the corner, and Fritz come beside me. Take Bertha between you, neighbors : she'll come to your table pretty soon, you know.

[*They sit down at the table on the right ; at left corner* MRS.

PIEPEBRINK, then himself, FRITZ, BERTHA, KLEINMICHEL.

Fritz — When will that pretty soon be, godfather? You've been saying that a long while, and still you are forever postponing the wedding day.

Piepenbrink — It's none of your business.

Fritz — Well, I should say it was, godfather! I am the one that wants to marry Bertha.

Piepenbrink — That's nothing : anybody can want that. But I'm going to give her to you, youngster, and that *will* be something, for it will be hard enough for me to let the little bird out of my nest. So wait. You shall have her, but wait.

Kleinmichel — He will wait, neighbor!

Piepenbrink — Well, he'd better! Hey, waiter, waiter!

Mrs. Piepenbrink — How poor the service is at such places!

Piepenbrink — Waiter! [*Waiter comes.*] My name is Piepenbrink! I've brought six bottles of my own wine with me. They are with the manager : I want them here.

[*While the waiter brings on bottles and glasses, enter BOLZ and KÄMPE at the door ; waiter back and forth in the background.*

Bolz [*aside to KÄMPE*] — Which is he?

Kämpe — The one with his back turned, with the broad shoulders.

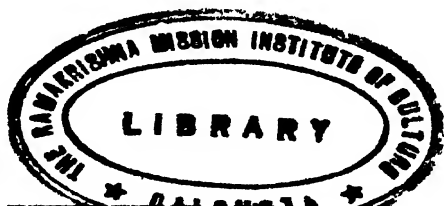
Bolz — And what kind of business is he in?

Kämpe — Mostly clarets.

Bolz — All right. [*Aloud.*] Waiter, a table and two chairs here! A bottle of claret!

[*Waiter brings the order to foreground at left.*

Mrs. Piepenbrink — What do they want here?



Piepenbrink — That's the disagreeable thing at such promiscuous gatherings, — that you can't be alone anywhere.

Kleinmichel — They seem to be respectable men : I think I've seen one of them before.

Piepenbrink [*decisively*] — Respectable or not, they are annoying to us.

Kleinmichel — They certainly are.

Bolz [*sitting down with KÄMPE*] — Here we can sit in peace over a bottle of claret, my friend. I have hardly the nerve to pour it out, for the wine in such places is almost always execrable. What kind of stuff may this be?

Piepenbrink [*exasperated*] — Huh? Listen to that!

Kämpe — Let's try it. [*Pours gently.*] There's a P. P. on the seal ; that may stand for Piepenbrink.

Piepenbrink — I am curious, though, to hear what fault these puppies will find with the wine.

Mrs. Piepenbrink — Be quiet, Philip : they can hear you over there.

Bolz [*softly*] — You are right, sure, the manager gets the wine from him ; that's why he is here, too.

Piepenbrink — You don't seem to be thirsty : you don't drink.

Bolz [*aloud, tasting it*] — Not bad!

Piepenbrink [*ironically*] — Indeed!

Bolz [*tastes again*] — A good pure wine!

Piepenbrink [*recovering*] — The man isn't a bad judge.

Bolz — But still, it isn't to be compared with a wine of the same sort I lately drank with a friend.

Piepenbrink — Indeed?

Bolz — Since then I know there's only one man in the city a cultivated wine-drinker should get his claret from.

Kämpe — And that is?

Piepenbrink [*ironically*] — I am curious, though.

Bolz — A certain Piepenbrink.

Piepenbrink [*pleased, nodding his head*] — Good!

Kämpe — Yes, that house is generally considered very respectable.

Piepenbrink — They don't know their wine is from my cellar too. Ha, ha, ha!

Bolz [*turning toward him*] — Are you laughing about us, sir?

Piepenbrink — Ha, ha, ha! No offense. I only heard you

talking about the wine. So Piepenbrink's wine tastes better to you than this? Ha, ha, ha!

Bolz [with mild indignation] — Sir, I must beg you to find my expressions less amusing. I don't know this Piepenbrink, but I have the pleasure of knowing his wine, and therefore I repeat the assertion that Piepenbrink has better wine in his cellar than this is. What do you find laughable in that? You don't know Piepenbrink's wine, and have no right whatever to judge.

Piepenbrink — I don't know Piepenbrink's wine, and I don't know Philip Piepenbrink, and I've never seen his wife, hey, Lotte? And if I met his daughter Bertha, I should ask, "Who is this little blacktop?" Great joke! Isn't that so, Kleinmichel? [Laughs.]

Kleinmichel — Very funny. [Laughs.]

Bolz [rising with dignity] — Sir, I am a stranger to you, and have never affronted you. You have a respectable appearance, and I find you in company with lovely women. Therefore I cannot believe that you are come here to insult a stranger. As a gentleman, I demand an explanation of you, what you find so striking in my harmless words. If you are an enemy of Mr. Piepenbrink, why do you make us suffer for that?

Piepenbrink [rising] — Don't get excited, sir! Look here! The wine you are drinking here is from Piepenbrink's cellar too, and the Philip Piepenbrink you are championing by pitching into me, I'm the very man. Now you understand why I laugh.

Bolz — Ah! is that the case? You are Mr. Piepenbrink himself? — Well, I am sincerely glad to make your acquaintance. No offense, respected sir.

Piepenbrink — No, no offense. It's all right.

Bolz — Since you were so friendly as to tell us your names, it is fair you should know ours, too. Doctor of Philosophy Bolz, and my friend here Mr. Kämpe.

Piepenbrink — Delighted.

Bolz — We are not much acquainted in the company, and withdrew into this side-room because one isn't at his ease among so many strange faces, you know. But we should be very sorry if our presence in any way disturbed the pleasure of the ladies and the conversation of such an estimable company. Say so right out, and if we annoy you, we'll look for another place.

Piepenbrink — You seem like a good fellow, and you're not in the least disagreeable to me, my dear Dr. Bolz — that was the name, I believe?

Mrs. Piepenbrink — We are strangers here too, and have only just sat down. — Piepenbrink ! [*Nudges him gently.*]

Piepenbrink — I tell you what, Doctor, as you know the yellow-seal brand from my cellar already, and have passed a very intelligent judgment on it, how would it be if you tried it over again here? The brand will taste better to you. Sit down with us, if you have nothing else to do, and we will have a little chat together.

Bolz [*diffidently, as in this whole scene, in which he, like KÄMPE, dares not appear at all obtrusive*] — That is a very friendly offer, and we accept it with thanks. Have the goodness, excellent sir, to make us acquainted with your company.

Piepenbrink — This is my wife here.

Bolz — Do not be offended at our intrusion, madam : we promise to be very nice, and as good company as it is possible for two bashful bachelors to be.

Piepenbrink — Here's my daughter.

Bolz [*to MRS. PIEPENBRINK*] — That might be guessed from the resemblance.

Piepenbrink — Here's Mr. Kleinmichel, my friend, and here's Fritz Kleinmichel, my daughter's betrothed.

Bolz — I congratulate you, gentlemen, on being in such delightful company. [*To PIEPENBRINK.*] Permit me to sit next the lady of the house. Kämpe, I should think you might take your place next Mr. Kleinmichel. [*They sit down.*] A motley crew. — Waiter ! [*The Waiter comes to him.*] Two bottles of this !

Piepenbrink — Hold on ! That wine you won't find here. I've brought my kind with me. You must drink with me.

Bolz — But, Mr. Piepenbrink —

Piepenbrink — No remonstrance. You shall drink with me. And when I tell any one he shall drink with me, sir, I don't mean sip, like the women, but drink up, pour in. So you may govern yourself accordingly.

Bolz — Good. I am pleased to. We accept your hospitality as thankfully as it is heartily offered. But you must permit me to retaliate then. Next Sunday you must all be my guests, won't you? Say yes, my kind host ! Punctually at seven o'clock, friendly supper. I am unmarried, consequently in a

respectable quiet hotel. Give your consent, dear madam. Your hand upon it, Mr. Piepenbrink; you also, Mr. Kleinmichel and Mr. Fritz. [*Extends hand to each.*]

Piepenbrink — If my wife thinks well of it, I can put up with it well enough.

Bolz — Agreed, done. And now the first toast: — The good spirit which has brought us together to-day, long live he! [*Asking around.*] What's the spirit called?

Fritz Kleinmichel — Chance.

Bolz — No, he wears a yellow cap.

Piepenbrink — Yellow Seal is his name.

Bolz — Right. Longlive he! We wish the gentleman a good long life, as the cat said to the bird when she bit off his head.

Kleinmichel — We let it live when we give it the finishing stroke.

Bolz — Well said. Hurrah!

Piepenbrink — Hurrah! [*They clink. To his wife.*] We'll have a good time to-day yet.

Mrs. Piepenbrink — They are very modest, nice people.

Bolz — You don't know how glad I am that our fortune led us into such good society. To be sure, everything in there is fitted up very prettily —

Piepenbrink — Everything is very becoming, it must be admitted.

Bolz — Very becoming! But this political company isn't to my taste, after all.

Piepenbrink — I see. You don't belong to the party, so it doesn't please you.

Bolz — That isn't it! But when I remember that these people are invited here not to have them glad straight from the heart, but to have them shortly give their votes to this or that man, I grow cool.

Piepenbrink — So the purpose isn't good, then. There'd be something to say on that: hey, friend?

Kleinmichel — I hope there's no obligation involved.

Bolz — Perhaps not, after all. I have no vote to dispose of, so give me a company where one thinks of nothing but enjoying himself with his neighbor and being attentive to the queens of the company, to lovely women! Clink glasses, gentlemen, to the health of the ladies, the two who adorn our circle.

[*All clink.*]

Piepenbrink — Here's to you, Lotte; long life!

Bolz — Miss Piepenbrink, permit a stranger to drink to the happiness of your future.

Piepenbrink — What's going on in there, anyhow?

Fritz Kleinmichel — I hear there are to be speeches at table, and the candidate, Colonel Berg, is to be introduced.

Piepenbrink — A very respectable gentleman!

Kleinmichel — Yes, it's a good choice the members of the committee have fixed on.

ADELHEID *in the background, then enters indifferently.*

Adelheid — He sitting here? What kind of a company is it?

Kämpfe — They say Professor Oldendorf has a fine prospect of being elected. A great many must be going to vote for him.

Piepenbrink — I have nothing to say against him, but he is too young for my taste.

Enter SENDEN; later BLUMENBERG and Guests.

Senden [in the background] — You here, Miss Runeck?

Adelheid — I am amusing myself observing these funny people. They eat as if the rest of the people were not in existence.

Senden — What's this? There sits the *Union* itself, and with one of the most important persons at the reception!

[Music ceases.]

Bolz [who has meanwhile been conversing with MRS. PIEPENBRINK, but has listened attentively; — to MRS. PIEPENBRINK] — Ah, you see the gentlemen couldn't keep from talking politics. Weren't you mentioning Professor Oldendorf?

Piepenbrink — Yes, my jolly doctor — incidentally.

Bolz — If you do speak of that man, I earnestly beg you to speak good of him, for he is the best and noblest man I know.

Piepenbrink — Ah, you know him?

Kleinmichel — You are one of his friends, then?

Bolz — More than that. If the Professor said to me to-day, "Bolz, it would be a good thing for me if you jumped into the water," I should have to leap in, unpleasant as it would be to me just now to drown in water.

Piepenbrink — Oho, that is strong.

Bolz — I have no right, in this company, to join in talking over the candidates. But if I had a representative to choose, it couldn't but be him first of all.

Piepenbrink — You are greatly taken with the man.

Bolz — His political views don't concern me here. But

what do I require in a deputy? That he shall be a man; that he shall have a warm heart and a sound judgment, and that he shall know without hesitating or asking any questions what is right and honest; and in addition that he shall have the strength to do what he perceives to be right, without delay and without hesitation.

Piepenbrink — Bravo!

Kleinmichel — But the Colonel is said to be such a man too.

Bolz — Possibly he is, I don't know; but about Oldendorf I do know. I have seen right into his heart when a disagreeable thing happened to me. I was once just on the point of being burned to a cinder when he had the presence of mind to prevent it. I owe it to him that I am sitting here; he saved my life.

Senden — He is lying outrageously! [*Starting forward.*]

Adelheid [*holding him back*] — Hush! I believe there's some truth in the story.

Piepenbrink — Well, it was very fine that he saved your life; still, that sort of thing often happens.

Mrs. Piepenbrink — But tell about it, Doctor!

Bolz — The little event is like a hundred others, and it wouldn't be at all interesting to me if I had not experienced it myself. Imagine an old house; I am a student, and live in it up three flights. In the house opposite me lives a young scholar; we don't know each other. In the middle of the night I am awakened by a confused alarm and a curious crackling under me. If that were mice, they must be executing a torch dance, for my room was brightly illuminated. I spring to the window; the bright flame is leaping up to me from the story below, my window panes jump out around my head, and a nasty thick smoke pours in upon me. As under these circumstances it would be disagreeable to get out by the window, I run to the door and open it. Even the stairs cannot renounce the vulgar peculiarity of old wood, they are burning in bright flames. Three flights high and no way out: I gave myself up for lost! — Half senseless, I rushed back to the window, I heard some one calling on the street: "A man, a man! the ladder here!" — A ladder was put in place, it began in an instant to smoke and burn like tinder; it was snatched away. Then the streams of water from all the hose-pipes shot into the flames beneath me; I distinctly heard each separate jet strike against

the glowing wall. A fresh ladder was raised ; it was amidst a deathlike silence, and you may imagine that even I had no desire to make a display in my fiery oven. Down below, the people were crying, "No use," when a powerful voice sounded through all, "Up with the ladder,"—and see, I knew on the spot that this was my rescuer's voice. "Quick," called the people below. Then a new cloud of smoke rushed into the room : I had swallowed enough of the thick smoke, and lay down by the window on the floor.

Mrs. Piepenbrink — Poor Doctor !

Piepenbrink [eagerly] — Go on ! [*SENDEN starts forward.*

Adelheid [holding him back] — Please let him finish : the story is true !

Bolz — Then a man's hand seizes me by the back of the neck, a rope is slung under my arms, and a strong hand raises me from the floor. A moment more and I was on the ladder ; half dragged, half carried, with a burning shirt and unconscious, I reached the stone pavements. — I awoke in the room of the young scholar. I brought nothing but a few slight burns into the new dwelling : all my belongings were burned up. The strange man nursed me and cared for me, as one brother for another. — And when I could get about again, I learned that this scholar who had taken me in was the self-same man who had paid me a visit that night on the ladder. — You see the man's heart is in the right spot, and that is why I want him to be made deputy now, and that is why I could do for him what I would not do for myself : I could solicit, intrigue, and bamboozle honest people for him. That man is Professor Oldendorf.

Piepenbrink — He is certainly a man to be thoroughly honored. [*Standing.*] Long life to him.

[*All stand and clink glasses.*

Bolz [bowing genially to all ; says to MRS. PIEPENBRINK] — I see a warm sympathy glowing in your eyes, noble lady, and I thank you for it ! — Mr. Piepenbrink, I ask permission to shake your hand. You are an excellent man. [*Pats him on the back and embraces him.*] Give me your hand, Mr. Kleinmichel ! [*Embraces him.*] You also, Mr. Fritz Kleinmichel ! May no child of yours ever be in the fire, but if it is there, may there always be a brave man at hand to snatch it out ; come nearer, I must embrace you too.

Mrs. Piepenbrink [with emotion] — Piepenbrink, we have

roast veal to-morrow. What do you think? [*Speaks softly with him.*]

Adelheid — He is growing very presumptuous.

Senden — He is unbearable. I see you are as indignant as I am. He is capturing our people; it is not to be borne any longer.

Bolz [*who has gone around the table, turning back and standing before MRS. PIEPENBRINK*] — It is really wrong to stand quiet here. Mr. Piepenbrink, as head of the family, I ask, I beg permission — the hand or the mouth?

Adelheid [*anxiously at right front*] — He's actually going to kiss her!

Piepenbrink — Go ahead, old fellow, brace up!

Mrs. Piepenbrink — Piepenbrink, I don't know what's come over you!

Adelheid [*at the moment when BOLZ is about to kiss MRS. PIEPENBRINK, goes past them as if accidentally, diagonally across the stage, and holds her bouquet between BOLZ and MRS. PIEPENBRINK; softly and quickly to BOLZ*] — You are going too far. You are observed. [*From the left to the background, and exit.*]

Bolz. — A fairy intervenes!

Senden [*who has been previously occupied in speaking with several other guests, among them BLUMENBERG, at the same moment comes noisily forward, and says to the company at the table*] — He is very presumptuous: he's an intruder here.

Piepenbrink [*flinging out his hand and rising*] — Oho! Well, I must say! If I kiss my wife or let her be kissed, that's nobody's business. Nobody's! No man and no woman and no fairy has the right to put a hand before her mouth.

Bolz — Quite right! Capital! Hear! Hear!

Senden — Honored Mr. Piepenbrink! Nothing against you: the society is very glad to see you in this place. But we would remark to Mr. Bolz that his presence here causes a sensation. He has such decidedly different political principles that we can only regard his appearance at this reception as an unbecoming intrusion.

Bolz — You say I have other political principles? In society I know no other political principle than that of drinking with worthy people, and not drinking with those I do not consider worthy. With you, sir, I have not drunk.

Piepenbrink [*striking upon the table*] — That was a good shot.

Senden [*hotly*] — You have intruded yourself here !

Bolz [*indignantly*] — Intruded ?

Piepenbrink — Intruded ? Old boy, you have an admission ticket, haven't you ?

Bolz [*with candor*] — Here is my ticket. Not to you will I show it, but to this honorable gentleman you wish to bring me into discord with by your assault. — *Kämpe*, give Mr. *Piepenbrink* your ticket ! He is the man to judge of all the tickets in the world.

Piepenbrink — These are tickets just as good as mine. You have handed them out everywhere, you know, like sour grape-juice. Ho, ho ! I see well enough how the thing stands. I don't belong to your concern either, but you want to have me ; so you've run around to my house two or three times because you thought you'd capture me. Because I'm an elector, you take an interest in me ; but this gentleman isn't an elector, so you don't take any interest in him. We know all about such dodges !

Senden — But, Mr. *Piepenbrink* —

Piepenbrink [*interrupting him more severely*] — Is it right to insult a peaceable guest on that account ? Is it right to stop up my wife's mouth ? It's an injustice to this man, and now he shall stay here ! and he shall stay here side of me. And whoever undertakes to attack him will have me to reckon with !

Bolz — Your hand, my brave sir ! You are a true comrade. So hand in hand with thee¹ will I defy Capulet and his whole tribe.

Piepenbrink — With thee ! Thou'rt right, old boy. Come here, let them rave till they burst. Here's to Thee and Thou ! [*I.e., fast friendship. They proceed to "drink brotherhood," by interlocking right arms, and drinking to the new relation from glasses in their right hands.*]

Bolz — Hurrah for *Piepenbrink* !

Piepenbrink — Ha, old fellow ! and let me tell thee something. Since we are so congenial, I say let these people do as they please, and you all come home with me ; there I'll brew a bowl and we'll be merry as starlings together. I'll escort thee ; you others get along.

Senden and Guests — But listen, at least, esteemed Mr. *Piepenbrink* !

Piepenbrink — I won't listen to anything : it's all settled !

¹ The *thee* implies close intimacy.

Enter BELLMAUS and still other Guests.

Bellmaus [hurrying through the crowd] — Here I am!

Bolz — My nephew! Kind madam, I place him under your protection! Nephew, you escort Madam Piepenbrink. [MRS. PIEPENBRINK seizes BELLMAUS vigorously under the arm, and holds him tight. Polka behind the scenes.] Good-bye, gentlemen; you can't spoil our good humor. There's the music striking up. We will march away in procession, and once more I cry in conclusion, Hurrah for Piepenbrink!

Departing Group — Hurrah for Piepenbrink! [March off in triumph: FRITZ KLEINMICHEL with his affianced, KÄMPE with KLEINMICHEL, MRS. PIEPENBRINK with BELLMAUS, finally BOLZ with PIEPENBRINK.]

Colonel [appears] — What's going on here?

Senden — An infamous scandal! The Union has carried off our two most influential electors!

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Scene: same drawing-room as at beginning. The COLONEL in the foreground, walking back and forth with heavy tread. In the background ADELHEID and IDA arm in arm. The latter in lively agitation. Short pause; then —

Senden [hurriedly calling in at the middle door] — It's going well! 37 votes against 29.

Colonel — Who has the 37?

Senden — You, of course, Colonel!

Colonel — Of course! [Exit SENDEN.] Election day is intolerable! In no other affair of my life have I had this feeling of anxiety! It is a contemptible cannon-fever that would disgrace any corporal! And it's a long time since I was a corporal. [Stamping on the floor.] Damn it! [Goes to the background.]

Ida [walking into the foreground with ADELHEID] — This uncertainty is dreadful. But I know one thing certain: I shall be unfortunate whichever way this election turns out. [Leans on ADELHEID.]

Adelheid — Courage! courage, my little girl! all may be well yet. Hide your anxiety from your father: he is already in a mood that I don't like.

BLUMENBERG *appears hurriedly at the door ; the COLONEL meets him.*

Colonel — Well, sir, how does it stand ?

Blumenberg — 41 votes for you, Colonel, 34 for the other side, three votes scattering. The votes only come in one by one now, but the difference in your favor remains pretty much the same. Eight more votes for you, Colonel, and the day is won. There is the highest probability now that we shall win. I must hurry back, it's nearly decided. Regards to the ladies. *[Exit.]*

Colonel — Ida ! *[IDA hurries to him.]* Are you my nice daughter ?

Ida — Dear father !

Colonel — I know what worries you, my child. You have the worst of it. Console yourself, Ida : if, as seems likely, the young literary man must leave the field to the old soldier, we'll talk further. Oldendorf has not deserved it of me ; there is a great deal in him that vexes me. But you are my only child : I'll think only of that. The main point now is to break the boy's obstinacy. *[Releases IDA ; again walks up and down.]*

Adelheid *[in the foreground, aside]* — The barometer has risen, the sun of good-will breaks through the clouds. If it were only all over ! such excitement is contagious. *[To IDA.]* You see it isn't necessary yet for you to go into a convent.

Ida — But if Oldendorf fails, how will he bear it ?

Adelheid *[shrugging her shoulders]* — He loses a seat in a disagreeable company, and wins an amusing little wife instead. I should think he might be content. In either case he'll have a chance to make his speeches : what odds whether he makes them in one chamber or the other ! I believe you will listen to him more attentively than any Representative.

Ida *[diffidently]* — But, Adelheid, suppose it was better for the country that Oldendorf should be elected ?

Adelheid — Yes, my dear, but the country isn't past help even so. Our state and the other countries of Europe will have to see how they can get on without the Professor ; charity begins at home : you want to marry him, you come first ! *[Enter KARL.]* What is it, Karl ?

Karl *[to COLONEL]* — Mr. Von Senden sends his compliments and the word "47 to 42" : the election commissioner has already congratulated him.

Colonel — Congratulated? Get my uniform out, ask for the key to the wine cellar, and get ready: we may have callers this evening.

Karl — At your service, sir.

[*Exit.*]

Colonel [*aside, in the foreground*] — How is it now, young Mr. Professor? My style doesn't please you! That may be, — I admit you are a better journalist; but here where it means business, you can't hold your position at all! [*Pause.*] Perhaps it will be necessary for me to say a few words this evening. With my regiment I have the reputation of always knowing how to speak to the point, but at these manœuvres in civil dress I feel ticklish. Let me think! It will be the proper thing to mention Oldendorf in my speech too, of course with respect and recognition. Yes indeed, I must do that. He is an honorable man of excellent heart, and a scholar of good judgment. And he can be very charming if you leave his political theories out of sight. We have spent happy evenings together. And when we used to sit around my big tea-kettle together, and the honest fellow began to tell his stories, Ida's eyes would be fixed upon his face and sparkle with delight — and I suppose my old eyes too. Those were grand evenings! Why are they no more? Bah! they'll come again. He'll bear his defeat calmly, as his way is — a good comforting way! No sensitiveness in him! He's an excellent man at bottom, and Ida and I should be happy with him. And therefore, gentlemen electors — But good heavens, I can't say all that to the voters. I will say —

Enter SENDEN excitedly.

Senden — Shameful! shameful! It's all up!

Colonel — Ha! [*Stands at once in military composure.*]

Ida } [*together*] — { I foreboded it, father! [*Hurries*
Adelheid } { Oh, bother! [*to him.*

Senden — Things were going capitally. We had 47 votes, the other side 42, eight votes still to come: only two of those for us and the day was ours! The hour had come when according to law the polls must be closed. Every one looked at the clock and shouted to the voters that hung back. Then there was a racket at the entrance hall, and a noisy group of eight men crowded into the hall, headed by that boor of a wine-merchant Piepenbrink, the same one that a little while ago at the reception —

Adelheid — We know, tell on —

Senden — One after the other of the company stepped forward and gave his vote, and "Professor Edward Oldendorf" came from every mouth. The last was this Piepenbrink. Before he cast his vote he asked his neighbor: "Has the Professor got it sure?" "Yes," was the answer. "And I choose, as last voter for deputy —" [Pauses.]

Adelheid — The Professor?

Senden — No. "A very clever and wide-awake politician," so he said, "Dr. Konrad Bolz" — and with that he turned short round and his henchmen followed him off.

Adelheid [*aside, smiling*] — Ah-h!

Senden — Oldendorf is representative by a majority of two.

Colonel — Huh!

Senden — It's scandalous! No one is to blame for this result but these journalists of the *Union*. There was soliciting, intriguing, hand-shaking with all the electors, praising of this Oldendorf, and shrugging their shoulders over us and over you, honored sir!

Colonel — Indeed?

Ida — That last is not true!

Adelheid [*to SENDEN*] — Be considerate and hold yourself in, here!

Colonel — You are trembling, daughter. You are a woman and let such trifles take hold of you too hard. I don't want you to listen to these reports any longer. Go, child! Your friend has won, you know: there is nothing for you to weep over. See to her, Adelheid!

Ida [*led by ADELHEID to side door at left, says entreatingly*] — Let me stay with father.

Senden — On my honor, the low tone and insolence this paper is edited with isn't to be borne any longer. Colonel, now that we are alone — if Miss Adelheid will permit me to count her on our side — we have a chance to revenge ourselves brilliantly: they have had their own way long enough. Some time ago I had the proprietor of the *Union* sounded. He is not disinclined to sell the paper, and hesitates merely on account of the so-called party that runs the sheet at present. I talked with him myself at the club this evening.

Adelheid — What's this?

Senden — The result of this election will rouse the bitterest feeling in all our friends, and I feel sure in a few days we could.

raise the money that's asked by a stock subscription. That would be a deadly blow for the other side, and a triumph for the good cause. The most widely read sheet of the province in our hands, edited by a committee—

Adelheid — To which Mr. Von Senden would not refuse his aid.

Senden — It would be my duty to take a hand in it. — Colonel, if you would subscribe too, your lead would insure the purchase in a moment.

Colonel — Sir, you may do what you like in the interest of your political purposes. But Professor Oldendorf has been a welcome guest at my house, and I will never work against him behind his back. — You would have spared me this hour if you had not deceived me before by your assurances about the sentiment of the majority. However, I am not angry with you : you have acted with the best of intentions, I am convinced of that. — I beg those present to excuse me if I retire for to-day ; I hope to see you again to-morrow, my dear Senden.

Senden — Meanwhile, I'll work up the subscription to buy out the paper. Good-morning. [*Exit.*]

Colonel — Pardon me, Adelheid, if I leave you alone. I want to write some letters, and [*with a forced laugh*] to read my newspapers.

Adelheid [*sympathetically*] — Mayn't I keep you company at present?

Colonel [*with an effort*] — It is better for me to be alone just now. [*Exit by middle door.*]

Adelheid [*alone*] — My poor Colonel ! Injured vanity boils up hard in his honest soul ! — And Ida ? [*Softly opens door at left, and stands there.*] She is writing ! It is not hard to guess who to. [*Closes door.*] And all this mischief the wicked spirit of journalism has done. All the world complains of it, and every one takes advantage of it. My Colonel despised newspaper writers so long till he became one himself, and Senden loses no chance of blaming my good friends of the pen, merely in order to step into their places. I can see that Piepenbrink and I will be journalists too, and get out a little sheet together under the title "The Naughty Bolz." So the *Union* is in danger of being secretly sold. That would be very wholesome for Konrad, for then he would have to think of other things than the newspaper. Ah, the rogue would begin over again forthwith.

OLDENDORF, KARL, then IDA.

Oldendorf [*still outside the hall*] — Then the Colonel isn't to be seen?

Karl — Not by anybody, Mr. Professor. [*Exit.*]

Adelheid [*vis-à-vis with OLDENDORF*] — Dear Professor, it isn't judicious for you to come just now. We are sorely afflicted and out of sorts with the world, and especially with you.

Oldendorf — I was afraid so, but I must speak with him.

Ida [*from door at left, vis-à-vis*] — Edward! I knew you would come.

Oldendorf — Dear Ida! [*Embraces her.*]

Ida [*on his neck*] — And what will become of us now?

Enter COLONEL, by middle door.

Colonel [*with affected composure*] — You shall not remain in uncertainty about that, daughter! — As for you, Mr. Professor, I beg you to forget that you once found friendship in this house; I ask thee to think no more of the hours when this man conversed with thee about his feelings. [*With rising temper.*] Be silent: in my house at least I bear no attacks from a journalist. [*To IDA.*] Forget him or forget that you are my daughter. Go in! [*Leads IDA without harshness off to the left, places himself before the door.*] At this post, Mr. Editor and Representative, before my child's heart, you shall not defeat me.

[*Exit left.*]

Adelheid [*aside*] — Oh dear, how hateful!

Oldendorf [*before the COLONEL, who has turned to go, determinedly*] — Colonel, it is ungenerous to deny me a hearing now! [*Goes up to the door.*]

Adelheid [*quickly stepping in his way*] — Stop, no farther! He is in a state of mind where every word does mischief! — But don't leave us so, Professor: grant me a few moments yet.

Oldendorf — I must ask your forbearance while I am in this humor. I have long been afraid of a scene like this, and scarcely feel the strength now to preserve my self-command.

Adelheid — You know our friend, and you know that his keen sensibilities hurry him into rash actions.

Oldendorf — That was worse than a fit of temper. It is a rupture between us two — a rupture that seems incurable to me!

Adelheid — Incurable, Professor? If your feeling for Ida

is what I take it to be, the cure is not difficult. Was it not for you to yield to the father's wishes lately, just lately? Doesn't the woman you love deserve the sacrifice of your ambition at least once?

Oldendorf — My ambition, yes; my duty, no.

Adelheid — Your own happiness, professor, seems to me ruined for a long while, perhaps forever, if you are separated from Ida on such grounds.

Oldendorf [*sadly*] — Not every one can be happy in his private life.

Adelheid — This resignation doesn't please me at all, least of all in a man; pardon me for telling you so frankly. [*Good-naturedly.*] Is it so great a misfortune, then, if you become city deputy a few years later, or never?

Oldendorf — Miss Runeck, I am not conceited, I do not rate my powers very high, and, so far as I know myself, no ambitious impulse lurks at the bottom of my heart. It is possible that a later time will set, as you do now, a very low value on our political wrangles, our party strifes, and whatever is connected therewith. It is possible our entire work is to remain fruitless; it is possible that much of the good we long for may turn into the opposite when obtained; yes, it is extremely probable that my own part in the struggle will be often painful, unsatisfactory, and not at all what could be called a grateful task: but all that must not prevent me from devoting my life to the contest and struggle of the time I belong to; for this contest is nevertheless the highest and noblest pursuit the present affords. Not every age permits its sons to achieve results that remain great for all time; and I repeat it, not every century is qualified to make the men who live in it both distinguished and happy.

Adelheid — I think every age is qualified for it if the individuals only understand how to be capable and happy. [*Rising.*] You, professor, will do nothing for the trifle of having a happy home life: you compel your friends to act for you.

Oldendorf — Anyway, don't be angrier than you can help, and speak for me with Ida.

Adelheid — I'll try to be of use to you, with my woman's wit, Mr. Statesman. [*Exit OLDENDORF.*] [*Alone.*] So that's one of the noble and highly trained, one of the free spirits of the German nation? Very virtuous and extraordinarily reasonable! scrambles into the fire from pure sense of

duty? But to win something — the world, fortune, or even a wife — he is not made for that at all!

Enter KARL.

Karl [*announces*] — Dr. Bolz!

Adelheid — Ah! — He at least will not be so heroically virtuous! — Where is the Colonel?

Karl — In Miss Ida's room.

Adelheid — Show the gentleman in here. [*Exit KARL. ADELHEID, to herself.*] I feel some embarrassment at seeing you again, Mr. Bolz; I will take pains not to let you see it.

Enter BOLZ.

Bolz — Just in the act of leaving you is one poor soul who seeks in vain to console himself by his philosophy: I too come as an unfortunate, for yesterday I incurred your displeasure; and without your presence, which cut short a malicious scene, Mr. Von Senden in the interest of social propriety would have done me a still scurvier turn. I thank you for the reminder you gave me; I take it as evidence you will not withdraw your friendly interest from me.

Adelheid [*aside*] — Very neat, very diplomatic! [*Aloud.*] It is kind of you to put so good a construction on my singular conduct. But pardon still one more bold piece of meddling: That scene with Mr. Von Senden will not be the occasion of another?

Bolz [*aside*] — Always that Senden! [*Aloud.*] Your interest in him shall be a reason to me for averting further consequences. I think I am able.

Adelheid — Thank you. And now it may as well be said that you are a formidable strategist. You have brought about utter defeat in this house. — On this gloomy day only one thing has given me joy, — the single vote that wanted to make you deputy.

Bolz — It was a crazy whim of the honest wine-merchant.

Adelheid — You have taken so much pains to pull your friend through! Why haven't you worked for yourself? The young man I once knew had a high intellect, and nothing seemed unattainable to his soaring ambition. Have you become different, or does the fire still burn?

Bolz [*smiling*] — I am become a journalist, dear Miss Adelheid.

Adelheid — So is your friend.

Bolz — Only incidentally, but I belong to the profession. Whoever belongs to that can have the ambition to write wittily or weightily; anything beyond is not for us.

Adelheid — Not for *you*?

Bolz — We are too superficial, restless, and scatter-brained for that.

Adelheid — Are you in earnest, Konrad?

Bolz — Dead earnest. Why should I show myself to you other than I am? We newspaper writers feed our minds on the news of the day; we have to taste in the smallest morsels all the dishes Satan cooks for men: so you must make some allowance for us. The daily exasperation over failures and corruption, the everlasting little sensations over every possible thing—that wears on a man. At the outset you double up your fist; later on you get used to making fun of things. When a man is always working for the day, isn't it natural for him to live in the day too?

Adelheid [*disquieted*] — That is sad indeed!

Bolz — On the contrary, it's altogether jolly. We hum like the bees, fly in spirit over the world, suck honey wherever we find it, and sting anything that offends us. — Such a life is not exactly made to mold great heroes, but there has to be such fellows in the world as we are.

Adelheid [*aside*] — Now he is beginning too, and he is even more annoying than the other.

Bolz — So we don't want to get sentimental! I write straight on as long as it goes. When it doesn't go any more, others step in for me and do the same. When Konrad Bolz, the wheat, is ground up in the big mill, other grain falls on the stone till the flour is ready, out of which perhaps the future will bake a good bread for the benefit of the many.

Adelheid — No! no! That is fanaticism: such resignation is a wrong.

Bolz — Such resignation is found at last in every calling. It is not your lot! To you belongs another fortune, and you will find it. [*Feelingly.*] *Adelheid*, I wrote you tender verses when I was a boy, and cheated myself with foolish dreams; I have loved you very much, and the wound our separation gave me smarts yet sometimes. [*ADELHEID makes a deprecating motion.*] Don't be frightened, I won't harm you. — I have long resented my fate, and have had hours when I seemed to

myself an outcast. But now, when you stand before me in full splendor, so beautiful, so winning, and my feeling for you is as warm as ever, I still have to say: Your father treated me roughly, it is true; but that he separated us,—that he prevented you; the rich heiress, used to high pretensions, at home in exclusive circles, from giving your life to a wild youth who had always displayed more pride than strength,—that was after all very sensible, and he did entirely right about it.

Adelheid [*grasping his hands with emotion*] — I thank you, Konrad, I thank you for speaking so of my dead father. Yes, you are good, you have a heart; it makes me very happy that you have shown it to me.

Bolz — It is only a very small pocket heart for private use; it was against my will it came into view in this way.

Adelheid — And now enough of us two. Here in the house they need our help. You have triumphed, have done your will completely against us. I submit and acknowledge you my master. But now exercise clemency and become my confederate. In this strife of men, a rough hand has been laid on the heart of a girl I love. I want to make up for that, and wish you to help me.

Bolz — Command me.

Adelheid — The Colonel must be brought around. Contrive something to heal his wounded self-love.

Bolz — I have thought of it and prepared something. Unfortunately, I can do nothing except make him conscious that his anger against Oldendorf is a folly. The mild state of mind that leads to reconciliation you alone can evoke.

Adelheid — Then we women must seek our own salvation.

Bolz — Meantime I hasten to do the little I can.

Adelheid — Farewell, Mr. Editor. And keep in mind not alone the course of the great world, but sometimes too a solitary friend who suffers from the unworthy selfishness of seeking happiness on her own account.

Bolz — You have always found your happiness in caring for others' happiness. For one who has that selfishness it is no trouble to be happy. [*Exit BOLZ.*]

Adelheid [*alone*] — He still loves me! He is a tender-hearted, high-minded man! — But even he is resigned; they are all sick, these men. They have no courage! From sheer learning and introspection they have lost confidence in themselves. That Konrad! Why doesn't he say to me, "Adelheid,

I want you to be my wife"? He is forthputting enough in other ways. But not he: he philosophizes about my kind of happiness and his kind of happiness! It was all very beautiful, but it's just nothing but silliness. My neighbor squires in the country are very different people. They carry no great loads of knowledge about with them, and they have an unpardonable number of freaks and prejudices; but they hate and love away heartily and pig-headedly, and never forget to look out for No. 1. They are better for it: give me the country, fresh air, and my acres. [*Pause; with determination.*] The *Union* shall be sold! Konrad shall come into the country with me to get rid of his cranks. [*Sits down and writes; rings.* KARL *comes in.*] Take this letter to Justice Schwarz, and say I beg him to come and see me on pressing business.

[*Exit KARL. Enter IDA from door at left.*]

Ida — I wander about without rest! Let me have my cry out here! [*Weeps on ADELHEID's neck.*]

Adelheid [*tenderly*] — Poor child! The wicked men have given you rough handling. Cry away, darling, but don't be so mute and resigned.

Ida — I have only one thought now: he is lost to me, lost forever!

Adelheid — You are my brave girl. But be calm! You have not lost him at all! On the contrary, we'll see that you get him back lovelier than ever. With flushed cheeks and beaming eyes shall he step before you again, that noble man, your chosen demigod; and your pardon shall the demigod beg, too, for having caused you pain.

Ida [*looking up at her*] — What is that you say?

Adelheid — Listen. To-night I have read in the stars that you are going to be Mrs. Representative. A great star fell from heaven, and on it in legible characters was written: "Without contradiction, she shall have him! Only one condition is annexed to the fulfillment."

Ida — What condition? Tell me.

Adelheid — I told you, recently, of a certain young lady and an unknown gentleman. Do you remember?

Ida — I have thought of it continually.

Adelheid — Good. Well, the same day this lady finds her knight again, you shall be reconciled to your Professor. Not sooner, not later — thus it is written.

Ida — I believe you so gladly! And when will the day come?

Adelheid — Well, my darling, that I can't tell exactly. But I'll tell you confidentially, since we girls are alone, the lady in question is heartily tired of her long hoping and waiting, and I fear she may take a desperate step.

Ida [*embracing her*] — Do hurry, so it won't take too long.

Adelheid [*holding her*] — Hush, let no man hear us! [*Enter KORB.*] What is it, my old friend?

Korb — Miss Runeck, Mr. Bellmaus is outside, the friend —

Adelheid — Ah, and he wishes to speak to me.

Korb — Yes, I myself advised him to apply to you. He has something to tell you.

Adelheid — Show him in! [*Exit KORB.*]

Ida — Let me leave you. My eyes are red.

Adelheid — You may go, my dear; I'll be with you again in a few minutes. [*Exit IDA.*] And he too! The whole staff of the *Union*, one after another!

Enter BELLMAUS, bashfully, with many bows.

Bellmaus — With your permission, dear miss!

Adelheid — I am pleased to see you, and curious to hear the interesting revelations you have to make to me.

Bellmaus — There is no one, dear miss, that I would rather confide what I have heard to than to you. Since I hear from Mr. Korb that you are a subscriber to our paper, I trust —

Adelheid — That I deserve to be a friend of the editors too. I thank you for your good opinion.

Bellmaus — There is that Schmock! He is a poor fellow that hasn't lived much in good company, and was one of the staff of the *Coriolanus* till just now.

Adelheid — I remember having seen him.

Bellmaus — At Bolz's desire I gave him several glasses of punch. He got happy on it, and told me of a great conspiracy hatched between Senden and the editor of the *Coriolanus*. These two men, according to his assurance, have planned to bring our Professor Oldendorf into discredit with the Colonel; so they urged the Colonel to write articles for the *Coriolanus*.

Adelheid — Do you think the young man who disclosed this to you is at all reliable?

Bellmaus — He can't stand much punch, and after he had drunk three glasses he told me all this of his own free will; as for the rest, to be frank, I don't consider him very respectable. I think he is a good fellow, but respectable? — no, he certainly isn't that.

Adelheid [*carelessly*] — Do you think this man — who drank the three glasses of punch — would be willing to repeat his disclosures before any other person?

Bellmaus — He told me he would, and talked about proofs also.

Adelheid [*aside*] — A-ha! [*Aloud.*] I am afraid the proofs will not be sufficient. — And you have not spoken of this to the Professor or Mr. Bolz?

Bellmaus — Our Professor is very busy just now, and Bolz is the best and jolliest fellow on earth; but as he is already on bad terms with Senden, I believe —

Adelheid [*quickly*] — And you are perfectly right, my dear Mr. Bellmaus. So otherwise you are satisfied with Mr. Bolz?

Bellmaus — He is a most companionable and excellent man, and I am on the best of terms with him — in fact, all of us are on good terms with him.

Adelheid — I am glad to hear it.

Bellmaus — Sometimes his head is a little swelled, but he has the best heart in the world.

Adelheid [*aside*] — Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings shall ye hear the truth.

Bellmaus — To be frank, he has an absolutely prosaic nature; no relish for poetry.

Adelheid — Do you think so?

Bellmaus — Yes, he often gets aggressive on the subject.

Adelheid [*bursting forth*] — I thank you for your communication, even if I can lay no weight on it; and I am glad to have made the acquaintance of part of the editorial staff in you. I am becoming aware that journalists are dangerous people, and it is well to keep their good-will; although I, as a person of no importance, shall try hard never to furnish matter for a newspaper article. [*As BELLMAUS lingers.*] Can I be of service to you in any other way?

Bellmaus [*ardently*] — Yes, dear miss, if you will be so good as to accept this copy of my poems. They are only youthful poems, my first attempts, but I count on your kind indulgence. [*Takes a gilt-edged volume from his pocket and hands it to her.*]

Adelheid — Thank you heartily, Mr. Bellmaus. Never before has a poet made me a present of his works. I shall read the handsome book through out in the country, and in

the shade of my trees rejoice that I have friends in the city who think of me when they portray the beautiful for others.

Bellmaus [with ardor] — Be assured, dear miss, that no poet will forget you who has had the good fortune of making your acquaintance. *[Exit with a low bow.]*

Adelheid [alone] — This Mr. Schmock with the three glasses of punch is well worth acquaintance, though. Korb shall look him up at once. — I have only just arrived in town, and already my room is like a business office, in which editors and authors act their parts. — I fear it forebodes something.

[Exit to left.]

[It grows dark. The COLONEL in the garden, advances slowly to the front.]

Colonel — I am glad we have done with one another. — *[Stamping.]* Very glad! *[Dejectedly.]* I feel free and buoyant as I have not for a long time; I believe I could sing. At this moment I am the subject of conversation over every cup of tea and in every beer saloon. Everywhere talk and laughter: "Serves him right, the old fool!" Damn it! *[Enter KARL with lights and a newspaper.]* Who gave you permission to light up?

Karl — Sir, it is the regular time you read the paper. Here it is. *[Lays it on table.]*

Colonel — Dirty crowd, these gentlemen of the pen! Cowardly, malicious, underhanded in their anonymity. How this gang are triumphing now, and over me! How they exalt their editor to the clouds! There lies the contemptible sheet! My defeat in it, trumpeted forth with puffed cheeks and a mocking shrug of the shoulders — to the devil with it! *[Paces up and down, looks at paper on the ground, takes it up.]* But I may as well swallow it! *[Seats himself.]* Here it is, right at the beginning: *[reading]* "Professor Oldendorf — majority of two votes." "This paper is in duty bound to rejoice at the result." — I should think so. — "But no less gratifying was the preceding campaign." — Naturally. — "It is perhaps unprecedented that, as here, two men have stood against each other, so closely connected by a friendship of years, and both equally distinguished by the favor of their fellow-citizens. It was a chivalrous contest between two friends, full of magnanimity, without ill-will, without jealousy — aye, perhaps there lay hidden in the soul of each the wish that his competing friend, and not himself, might be the victor." *[Lays the paper*

aside, wipes his brow.] What sort of language is this? [*Reads.*] “And, aside from his special party views, never has a man possessed greater claims to victory than our honored opponent. This is not the place to vaunt the high esteem in which he is held by the large circle of his friends and acquaintances, on account of his stanch and noble personality; but it is universally known, and especially to-day will be vividly and gratefully felt by our fellow-citizens, with what active interest he has advised and promoted all municipal enterprises for the public good.” [*Lays the paper aside.*] That’s a miserable style! [*Reads on.*] “By a very small majority of votes our city has decided to give the political views of the younger friend the floor in Parliament; but we hear that to-day addresses and deputations will be prepared by all parties, not to glorify the victor of the campaign, but to express to his opponent, his noble friend, the universal esteem and honor, of which no man was ever worthier.” Plain assassination! It’s a terrible indiscretion on Oldendorf’s part. It’s a journalist’s revenge, artful and sharp-pointed. Oh, it’s just like him! No, it isn’t like him! It’s shocking, it’s inhuman! — What shall I do? Deputations and addresses to me? to Oldendorf’s friend? — Bah, that is all gabble, newspaper talk; it costs him nothing but a handful of fine words! The city knows nothing of these sentiments. It’s a fraud!

Enter KARL.

Karl — Letters from the city mail. [*Lays them upon the table, and goes out.*]

Colonel — Another hornets’ nest, I suppose! I hate to open them. [*Opens the first.*] The devil! a poem? and to me? “To our noble opponent in politics, the best man in the city.” — Signed — what is the signature? Baus! Baus? don’t know him: it must be a pseudonym! [*Reads.*] It seems to be most excellent poetry! — And what’s this? [*Opens second letter.*] “To the benefactor of the poor, the father of the orphan,” an address — [*Reads.*] “Veneration” — “Benevolence” — signature, “Many women and girls,” seal “P. P.” — Good Lord, what does all this mean? Am I bewitched? — If this is really the voice of the city, and the public to-day looks at it so, I must confess the people have a better opinion of me — than I have of myself.

Enter KARL.

Karl — A number of gentlemen wish to speak to the Colonel.

Colonel — What kind of gentlemen?

Karl — They say they are a delegation of electors.

Colonel — Bring them in. This cursed paper was right, after all.

Enter PIEPENBRINK, KLEINMICHEL, and three others. They bow; the COLONEL responds.

Piepenbrink [solemnly] — My dear Colonel! A number of electors have sent us as a deputation to you, to tell you, on this especial day, that the whole city regards you as a most respectable and excellent man.

Colonel [stiffly] — I am much obliged for the good opinion.

Piepenbrink — There's nothing to be obliged for. It is the truth. You are a man of honor through and through, and it gives us pleasure to tell you so; it can't be unpleasant to you to hear that from your fellow-citizens.

Colonel — I have always regarded myself as a man of honor, gentlemen.

Piepenbrink — And perfectly right. And you have also proved your noble nature. On every occasion, in poverty, famine, trusteeship, even at our rifle shoots, everywhere that a kind-hearted and good man could give us pleasure or do us service, there you were in the van. Always unassuming and stanch, no superciliousness or arrogance. Therefore it is that we all love and honor you. [*COLONEL passes his hand over his eyes.*] Many of us to-day cast our votes for the Professor. Some on account of politics, some because they know he is your close friend and may even be your son-in-law.

Colonel [without severity] — My dear sir —

Piepenbrink — Even I myself did not vote for you.

Colonel [with more heat] — Sir —

Piepenbrink — But just for that reason I came to you with the rest, and for that reason we tell you what the citizens think of you. And we all wish you may long preserve for us your manly nature and your kindly heart, as an honored, most respectable gentleman and fellow-citizen.

Colonel [without severity] — Why do you not say this to the Professor, on whom your choice has fallen?

Piepenbrink — He is still young. He must earn the thanks

of the city in Parliament first, to have them given him. But you *have* earned it, and therefore we come to you.

Colonel [cordially] — I thank you, sir, for your friendly words. They are very agreeable to me just now. May I ask you your name?

Piepenbrink — My name is Piepenbrink.

Colonel [more coolly, but not discourteously] — Ah, so that is the name! [*With dignity.*] I thank you, gentlemen, for the favorable opinions you have expressed, no matter whether you repeat the city's actual opinion or speak according to the wishes of a few. I thank you, and I shall continue to do what I think is right. [*Bows, deputation likewise; exit the latter.*] So that's this Piepenbrink, the ardent friend of his friend! — But the man's words were sensible and his whole bearing honorable; it's impossible all this can be rascality. — Who knows! They are adroit intriguers. Send newspaper articles, letters, and these good-natured people to my house, to make me soft-hearted, pose before all the world as my friends, so as to make me trust in their falsehood again. Yes, that's it. All cut and dried! But they'll find out their mistake!

Enter KARL.

Karl — Dr. Bolz!

Colonel — I am not at home any longer to anybody.

Karl — I told the gentleman so, but he insists on speaking with my master the Colonel, on an affair of honor.

Colonel — What? Oldendorf can't have gone so mad — show him in!

Enter BOLZ.

Bolz [with dignity] — Colonel, I have a communication to make to you which is necessary to the honor of a third person.

Colonel — I am prepared for it, and beg you not to make it too lengthy.

Bolz — No longer than necessary. The article in this evening's edition of the *Union*, which discusses your personality, was written by me and inserted in the paper without Oldendorf's knowledge.

Colonel — It's hardly of interest to me to know who wrote the article.

Bolz [politely] — But it is of importance to me to tell you that the article was not written by Oldendorf, and that Oldendorf knew nothing about it. My friend has for some weeks

past been through so much turmoil and vexation which he had to take on himself, that he has left the management of the paper entirely to me. For everything it has contained during this time I alone am responsible.

Colonel — And why do you give me this information?

Bolz — It cannot escape your keen discernment, Colonel, that after the scene which took place between you and my friend to-day, Oldendorf as a man of honor could neither write such an article nor accept it for his paper.

Colonel — How so, sir? I find nothing discreditable in the article itself.

Bolz — The article exposes my friend to your suspicion that he purposed to win back your sympathy through mean flattery. Nothing is farther from him than such a course. You, Colonel, are too much a man of honor to find base conduct natural even in your enemy.

Colonel — You are right! [*Aside.*] This haughtiness is unbearable. — Is your explanation at an end?

Bolz — It is. I have still another to add: that I very much regret myself having written that article.

Colonel — I don't think I am wronging you by presuming you have written other things before this you might better regret!

Bolz [*continuing*] — I had this article printed before I knew of your last conversation with Oldendorf. [*Very politely.*] I regret it on that account, because it is not quite correct. I was too hasty in portraying your personality for the public: the picture, at least to-day, is not a true likeness — it flatters you.

Colonel [*bursting forth*] — Sir, you are damnably ill-bred!

Bolz — I beg pardon, but it's the plain truth! I wish to convince you that even a journalist may regret having written falsehoods.

Colonel — Sir! [*Aside.*] I must hold in, or he'll always keep on top. — My dear doctor, I see you are a clever man and understand your business. And since you seem to be in the mood to-day to speak the truth, I beg you to tell me further whether you did not also arrange the demonstrations which present themselves to me to-day as the public voices.

Bolz [*with a bow*] — I was not certainly entirely inactive in the matter.

Colonel [*impetuously, holding out the letters to him*] — Are you back of this?

Bolz — Partly, Colonel. — This poem is the effusion of an honest youth, who reveres in you the fatherly friend of Oldendorf and the ideal of a knightly hero: I put him up to sending you the poem. The intention was good at least. The poet may look for another ideal. — The address is from women and girls who constitute the society for educating neglected children. The society also counts Miss Ida Berg among its members. I wrote this address for the ladies myself; it was copied by the daughter of the wine-merchant Piepenbrink.

Colonel — I sized up the letters about so. It is needless to ask whether you are also the wire-puller who has sent these citizens to me.

Bolz — Well, I didn't dissuade them.

[Numerous Chorus heard outside.]

Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!
 There dwells a knight so brave and mild
 Within our city's span,
 Beloved by every burgher's child,
 This true and noble man.
 Who seeks for help in pain and woe
 Calls for this knight adored;
 For Love is what his blazons show,
 And Pity is his sword.
 We bless to-day with heart and song
 This poor man's hope and champion strong,
 The Colonel, the Colonel,
 The noble Colonel Berg.

Enter KARL.

Colonel — Admit nobody if you wish to remain in my service.

Karl [*frightened*] — Why, Colonel, sir, they are in the garden already, a whole crowd of them. It's the Choral Union; the leaders are on the stairs by this time.

Bolz [*who has opened the window*] — Very well sung, Colonel. "Templar and Jewess" [opera]. The best tenor in the city, and the accompaniment is original enough.

Colonel [*aside*] — It's enough to drive one frantic! — Show the gentlemen in. *[Exit KARL.]*

After the song is concluded, enter FRITZ KLEINMICHEL and two other gentlemen.

Fritz Kleinmichel — Colonel, the Choral Union of this place respectfully asks for permission to sing you a few songs. Kindly

listen to the little serenade as a weak expression of the universal honor and love.

Colonel — Gentlemen, I am very sorry to say that sickness in my family makes it imperatively desirable for me to have your performance cut short. I thank you for your kind intentions, and beg you to sing to Professor Oldendorf the song you intended for me.

Fritz Kleinmichel — We thought it our duty to greet you first before looking up your friend. In order not to disturb the sick, we will, with your permission, station ourselves further away from the house, in the garden.

Colonel — As you please. [*Exit FRITZ KLEINMICHEL and the other two.*] Is this performance your invention also?

Bolz [with a bow] — At least in part! But you are too kind, Colonel, in referring all these demonstrations to me alone: my part in them is very slight after all. I have done nothing but edit public opinion a little. These many people are no puppets, which a skillful manipulator could move around with wires. All these voices belong to sound and honorable persons, and what they have said to you is really the general opinion of the city, — that is to say, the conviction of the better and more intelligent of the city. If it were not so I should have tried in vain to bring a solitary one of these good people to your house.

Colonel [aside] — He is in the right again, and I am always wrong!

Bolz [very politely] — But permit me to aver that to me also, at present, these tender expressions of public respect seem out of place, and that I very much regret having taken the part in them that I did. At least to-day a friend of Oldendorf has no cause to celebrate your chivalrous disposition and your self-denial.

Colonel [advancing toward him] — Doctor, you are abusing the privilege of your profession to talk recklessly and insult strangers in a manner that wears out my patience. You are in my house, and it is a customary axiom of social policy to respect the domestic rights of an opponent.

Bolz [leaning over a chair, good-naturedly] — If you mean by that to say you have the right to dismiss unacceptable strangers from your house, it was not necessary to remind me of it; for you have already to-day shown another the door, when his love for you gave him a better right to be here than I have.

Colonel — Sir, I have never met with such presumption before.

Bolz [*bowing*] — I am a journalist, Colonel, and claim only what you just now styled the privilege of my profession.

Grand march of wind instruments. KARL hastens in.

Colonel [*going toward him*] — Lock the garden gate; no one shall come in. [*The music ceases.*

Bolz [*at the window*] — You are shutting out your friends. This time I am innocent.

Karl — Ah, Colonel, it is too late. The singers are in the rear garden, and in front there's a monstrous procession coming toward the house; it is Mr. Von Senden and the whole club. [*Goes to rear.*

Colonel — Sir, I desire that this conversation between us be at an end.

Bolz [*leaping back from the window*] — In your position, Colonel, I find this wish very natural. [*Looking out again.*] A brilliant procession, all carrying Japanese lanterns. There are inscriptions on the lanterns! Besides the usual devices of the club I see others. — Oh, why is that man Bellmaus never at hand when he might be of service to the paper? [*Hastily taking a note-book from his pocket.*] I must take down the inscriptions for the paper at once. [*Speaking over his shoulder to the COLONEL.*] I beg pardon! — Ah, that's very remarkable: "Down with our enemies!" — and here a dark-colored lantern with white letters: "Perish the *Union*!" By thunder! [*Calling out of the window.*] Good evening, gentlemen!

Colonel [*stepping to his side*] — Sir, the devil has got into you!

Bolz [*turning about suddenly*] — It is very kind of you, Colonel, to show yourself beside me at the window. [*COLONEL steps back.*]

Senden [*from below*] — What voice is that?

Bolz — Good evening, Mr. Von Senden! The gentleman who carries the brown lantern with the white inscription would greatly oblige us if he would be kind enough to hand up the lantern to the Colonel. Blow out your light, man, and hand me up the lantern. That's right; thank you, man of the witty inscription. [*Hauling in the torch.*] Here, Colonel, is the documentary evidence of the brotherly sentiment your friends cherish toward us. [*Tears the lantern from the stick.*] The

torch for you, the stick for the torch-bearer. [*Throws the stick out of the window.*] I have the honor of taking leave of you.

[*Turns to make his departure, meets ADELHEID.*

[*Male chorus again approaches with, "There dwells a knight so brave and mild;" flourish chimes in; cheers from many voices, "Long live COLONEL BERG, hurrah!"*

ADELHEID *enters from left during the noise.*

Adelheid — Is the whole city in an uproar to-day?

Bolz — I've done my part: he is half converted. Good night!

Colonel [*hurling the lantern to the floor, in a rage*] — To the devil with all journalists!

[*Male chorus, SENDEN, BLUMENBERG, and many other gentlemen seen in procession at the garden gate; the deputation enters, chorus and lanterns group themselves at entrance.*

Senden [*in loud voice, till curtain reaches floor*] — Colonel, the club takes pride in saluting its most honored member.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Scene: Same drawing-room as at beginning. COLONEL enters from the garden, followed by KARL.

Colonel [*at entrance, brusquely*] — Who ordered William to practice the horse in front of the bedroom? The rascal is making enough racket with those hoofs to wake the dead.

Karl — Won't my master ride out to-day?

Colonel — No! put the horse up!

Karl — As you order, Colonel, sir.

[*Exit.*

Colonel [*rings; KARL reappears at door*] — Is the young lady to be seen?

Karl — She is in her room; the counselor has been with her for all of an hour.

Colonel — What? So early in the morning?

Karl — Here she is herself.

[*Exit, after ADELHEID has entered.*

Enter ADELHEID and KORB from door at right.

Adelheid [*to KORB*] — Stay close to the garden door, and if that young gentleman comes, bring him to us. [*Exit KORB.*]

Good morning, Colonel! [*Going up to him and looking at him mirthfully.*] How is the weather to-day?

Colonel—Dismal, girl, dismal and stormy. Vexation and worry are raging around my head, so it feels like bursting. How is the little one?

Adelheid—Better. She was wise enough to fall asleep toward morning. Now she is sad but composed.

Colonel—It's just that composure that annoys me. If she'd only scream, say, and tear her hair a little, it would be dreadful, but at least there would be nature in it. But this smiling and turning away and this wiping away secret tears—it unhinges me. It's unnatural in my child.

Adelheid—Perhaps she knows her father's kind heart better than he does himself; perhaps she still has hope!

Colonel—For what? For a reconciliation with him? After what has taken place, a reconciliation between Oldendorf and myself is impossible.

Adelheid [*aside*]—Wonder if he wants me to contradict him?

Enter KORB.

Korb [*to ADELHEID*]—The gentleman is here.

Adelheid—I'll ring. [*Exit KORB.*] Help me out of a little embarrassment: I have to talk with a strange young man, who seems in need of help; and I would like to have you stay near—may I leave the door open? [*Pointing to door at left.*]

Colonel—That means, in plain words, you want me to go in there.

Adelheid—If you please. Only for five minutes.

Colonel—I don't mind, so long as I needn't listen.

Adelheid—I don't ask that; but you will listen though, if the talk interests you.

Colonel [*smiling*]—In that case I shall come in. [*Exit to left.*]

ADELHEID rings. Enter SCHMOCK, and KORB who goes out as soon as he has appeared at entrance.

Schmock [*with a bow*]—I wish you a good morning. Are you the lady who sent her secretary to me?

Adelheid—Yes: you expressed a wish to speak to me.

Schmock—Why must the secretary know it if I've got something to tell you? Here are the notes Senden made, and I found in the waste-basket of the *Coriolanus*. Look and see

whether the Colonel needs them. What should I do with them? They are no use to me.

Adelheid [*glancing down and reading, aside*] — “I send you herewith the unhappy composition,” etc. — Indiscreet and very characteristic. [*Lays them on the table. Aloud.*] — At all events, these unimportant notes had better be kept in my waste-basket than any other. — But what led you, sir, to put your confidence in me?

Schmock — Well, Bellmaus there told me you are a clever woman, who would tell the Colonel in the right way he wants to look out for Senden and my editor. And the Colonel is a humane man: lately he set me up a glass of sweet wine and salmon and rolls for breakfast.

Colonel [*visible at the door, folding his hands compassionately*] — Poor devil!

Schmock — Why should I let these fellows impose on him?

Adelheid — If the breakfast agreed with you, we will provide for another.

Schmock — Oh, thank you! don’t put yourself to inconvenience on my account.

Adelheid — Can we be of service to you in any other way?

Schmock — How should you help me? [*Regarding his boots and clothes.*] I’m in fair condition at present. My only misfortune is that I’m stuck down to a poor business. I must see if I can’t get out of literature.

Adelheid [*compassionately*] — I imagine it’s very difficult to be comfortable in a literary life.

Schmock — That depends. — My editor isn’t a square man. He cancels too much and pays too little. “Pay particular attention to your style,” he says, “for a good style is the main thing. Write weightily, Schmock,” he says, “write profoundly: a newspaper nowadays is expected to be profound.” Well, I write profoundly, I make my style logical; but when I bring him the work he throws it away, and blatts out: “What kind of stuff is that? It’s heavy; it’s pedantic,” he says. “You must write spiritedly, you must be brilliant, Schmock: it’s the fashion now to have everything pleasant for the reader.” What am I to do? I go at it again, and write spiritedly. I put a lot of brilliancy into the article: and when I bring it to him, he takes the blue pencil and strikes out all the common things, and leaves me only the brilliant ones.

Colonel — Is such a thing possible?

Schmock — How can I make a living under such treatment? How can I write him clear brilliancy at a cent a line? I can't live on that. So I'm going to see if I can't get out of the business. If I could only save twenty-five or thirty thalers [thaler = 75 c.], I'd never write for a newspaper again as long as I lived; but I'd start a business of my own, — a small business, enough to support me.

Adelheid — Wait a moment. [*Searches in her purse.*]

Colonel [*hurrying up*] — Leave that to me, my dear Adelheid. The young man will quit being a journalist: I'll see to that! Here, here is money! be what you like, if you'll promise me from this day forth never to touch another pen for a periodical. Here, take it.

Schmock — A Prussian bank-note for twenty-five thalers [\$18] legal tender? On my honor, I promise you, Colonel Berg, on my soul and honor, I'll go this very day to a cousin of mine that has a good solid business. Would the Colonel like a promissory note, or shall I make out a long-time draft upon myself?

Colonel — Get out with your draft.

Schmock — Then I'll make out a regular note. I prefer myself it should be only a note.

Colonel [*impatiently*] — I don't want your note either. — In heaven's name, get out of here, sir!

Schmock — And how about the interest? If I can have it for five per cent, I'd like it.

Adelheid — The gentleman gives you the money.

Schmock — He gives me the money? Well, of all things! Tell you what it is, Colonel, sir, if I don't make anything of the money, it stays a gift; but if I set myself up with it, then I return it to you. I hope I shall set myself up.

Colonel — Settle that to your liking.

Schmock — I am very glad to do so, Colonel, sir. Meanwhile I thank you, and may you get your reward for it by another joy you have. Good morning, madam and sir.

Adelheid — We won't forget the breakfast. [*Rings; KORB enters.*] My dear Korb! [*Talks to him in low tones.*]

Schmock — Oh, I beg, don't bother about that!

[*Exeunt SCHMOCK and KORB.*]

Colonel — And now, my dear, explain this whole conversation to me. It concerns me nearly enough.

Adelheid — Senden has talked indiscreetly with others about

his relations to you and your household. This young man had heard some of them, and had notes of Senden's in his possession, in which some injudicious expressions occur. I thought it wise to get these letters out of his hands.

Colonel — I wish you would give me those letters, Adelheid.

Adelheid [*entreatingly*] — Why, Colonel?

Colonel — I won't get angry, my dear.

Adelheid — It isn't worth while. And yet I ask you not to look into them. You know enough now, for you know that he and his crowd don't know enough to value such great confidence as you granted him recently.

Colonel [*sadly*] — Oh, phoooh, phoooh! I'm having bad luck with my circle of acquaintance in my old age.

Adelheid — If you class Oldendorf with this one here [*pointing to the letters*], you are mistaken.

Colonel — I don't, my girl. I haven't cared so much for Senden, and so I take his injuring me easier.

Adelheid [*gently*] — And because you have cared for the other, you were yesterday so —

Colonel — Just say it right out, moralizer — so hard and violent.

Adelheid — More than that, you were wrong.

Colonel — I said the same thing to myself to-night when I went to Ida's room and heard the poor thing crying. I was a mortified and angry man, and wrong in the form; in the thing itself, though, I was right. Let him be a deputy, — perhaps he'll fit there better than I; but his being a newspaper man parts us.

Adelheid — But he is only doing what you did.

Colonel — Don't remind me of that folly! — If he, as my son-in-law, viewed the world's course differently from me, I could stand it well enough. But if he shouted to the world every day feelings and opinions contrary to mine, and I had to read it, and everywhere hear my son-in-law sneered at and abused by my friends and old comrades, and had to swallow all that down — you see, I can't do that.

Adelheid — And Ida? Because you won't bear that, Ida is to be unhappy.

Colonel — My poor child! She is unhappy now all the while. This half-and-half relation between us men has long been a bad thing. It is better to have it end with one great pang.

Adelheid [earnestly] — But I can't see the end. I shall not see it till Ida laughs as gayly again as she used to.

Colonel [walking about in agitation, bursting out] — Then I'll give him my child and sit down myself in a corner alone! — I thought to spend my last days otherwise, but God forbid my darling girl should be made unhappy by me! He is trusty and honorable; he will treat her well. — I'll go back to the little town I came from.

Adelheid [seizing his hand] — My true-hearted friend, no you shan't! Neither Oldendorf nor Ida would owe their happiness to such a sacrifice. — Suppose Senden and his friends should secretly carry off the Professor's newspaper, what then?

Colonel [pleased] — Then he wouldn't be a journalist any longer! [Uneasily.] I won't hear anything of the scheme; that underhand business doesn't please me.

Adelheid — Nor me either. [Sincerely.] Colonel, you have often placed confidence in me that made me proud and happy. To-day, moreover, you have allowed me to speak more rudely than a girl usually may. Will you give me one more great proof of your esteem?

Colonel [pressing her hand] — Adelheid, we know how we stand with each other. Speak out.

Adelheid — For an hour to-day be my true knight. Let me take you with me wherever it may be.

Colonel — What are you up to, child?

Adelheid — Nothing wrong; nothing that would be unworthy of you and me. It shall not remain a secret to you long.

Colonel — If it must be, I give myself up; but mayn't I know somewhere near what I have to do?

Adelheid — You are to make a call with me, and in doing so remember what we have just been saying so sensibly to each other.

Colonel — A call?

Enter KORB.

Adelheid — A call I am making in my own interests.

Korb [to ADELHEID] — Mr. Von Senden wishes to pay his respects.

Colonel — I can't see him at present.

Adelheid — Be quiet, dear Colonel: we have no time to be angry even with him. I shall have to see him for a few minutes.

Colonel — Then I'm going away.

Adelheid [entreatingly] — To get ready and go with me pretty soon? The carriage is waiting.

Colonel — I obey the captain.

[*Exit to the left.*]

Adelheid [*alone*] — I have made a sudden resolution : I have ventured on something far too bold for a girl — for now, as the crisis draws near, I feel my courage leaving me. — I must do it for his sake and for us all. [*To KORB.*] Ask Miss Ida to be in readiness. The coachman is to come back and get her at once. Dear Korb, think of me : I'm going on a momentous errand, my old friend. [*Exit.*]

Korb [*alone*] — Gracious, how her eyes glisten ! What is she up to ? Surely she wouldn't carry off the old Colonel outright ? But whatever it is, she'll put it through. There's only one man who could get the whip-hand of her. Mr. Konrad, if I only dared to speak ! [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

Scene : Office of the "Union." Enter BOLZ, from the door at the left ; immediately after, MÜLLER.

Bolz [*at the middle door*] — In here with the table.

Müller [*draws a small covered table, with bottles of wine, glasses, and plates, to the foreground at left, draws up five chairs, and says*] — Mr. Piepenbrink sends his compliments and says the wine is the Yellow Seal, and if the Doctor drinks healths, hopes he won't forget Mr. Piepenbrink's health too. He was very jolly, that big fellow. And Madame Piepenbrink at that reminded him he ought to subscribe to the *Union* ; he charged me to see to that.

Bolz [*meanwhile turning over papers ; now rising*] — Wine here ! [*MÜLLER pours out a glass.*] In honor of the worthy vintner ! [*Drinks.*] I guyed him, but his heart proved true. Tell him the health won't be forgotten. Here is your bottle ! Now clear out. [*Exit MÜLLER, BOLZ opening door at left.*] Come, you fellows, I keep my word to-day. [*Enter KÄMPE, BELLMAUS, and KÖRNER.*] Here's the breakfast I promised. And now, you charming ephemerides, quick ! paint your faces and your temper as rose-colored as only your wits can. [*Filling his glass.*] The great victory is gained, the *Union* has celebrated one of the noblest of triumphs ; still in centuries to come will our remote descendants say in astonishment, "Those were glorious days," *et cetera*, see continuation in to-day's paper. Before we sit down, the first toast —

Kämpe — The deputy elect —

Bolz — No, the first toast belongs to the common mother,

the great power, that brings forth deputies: the newspaper, long may it flourish!

All — Hurrah! [*Clink glasses.*]

Bolz — Hurrah! and now for the second — hold on, the deputy himself is still lacking.

Kämpfe — Here he comes.

Enter OLDENDORF.

Bolz — The representative of our venerable city, editor-in-chief and professor, journalist and staunch man, who is mad at present because strange things have been put in the paper behind his back, hurrah for him!

All — Hurrah!

Oldendorf [*amicably*] — I thank the gentlemen.

Bolz [*aside to OLDENDORF, drawing him toward the foreground*] — And you are not angry any more?

Oldendorf — Your intention was good, but it was a great piece of indiscretion.

Bolz — Don't think any more about it! [*Aloud.*] Here, take the glass; sit down with us. Don't be proud, young statesman, you belong to us to-day. That's right: here's the editorial staff. Where is the worthy Mr. Henning; where's the owner, printer, and publisher, Gabriel Henning?

Bellmaus — We have looked everywhere for him, but he's nowhere to be found.

Kämpfe — I met him out on the steps. He slunk past me as shamefacedly as a man that had made some stupid blunder.

Bolz — Probably it's the same with him as with Oldendorf: he is dissatisfied again with the attitude of the paper.

Müller [*sticking his head in*] — Here are the newspapers and mail matter.

Bolz — Over there!

[*MÜLLER comes in and lays the papers on the work-table.*]

Müller — Here's the *Coriolanus*. There's something about our paper in it. The *Coriolanus*' errand-boy grinned at me in a sneering way and recommended me to look over the article.

Bolz — Give it here! Be quiet, Roman populace, *Coriolanus* speaks. — Good Lord, what does this mean? [*Reads.*] "We have just learned from the best sources that a great change is about to take place in the newspaper interests of our province. — Our opponent the *Union* will cease to direct its unbridled attacks against everything high and holy." — This high and

holy is named Blumenberg. — "The proprietorship of that paper is to be transferred to other hands, and there is an undoubted prospect of our greeting an ally, from now on, in this widely circulated sheet." — How does that taste, you fellows?

Müller — Damnation !

Kämpe — That's nonsense !

Bellmaus — It's a lie !

} [Together.]

Oldendorf — That's another of Blumenberg's fantastic inventions.

Bolz — There's something behind it. Bring Gabriel Henning here to me ! [*Exit MÜLLER.*] This owner has played the traitor : we are poisoned [*jumping up*], and this is Borgia's banquet. Presently the Brothers of Mercy will come in and sing our dirge. — Do me the favor of eating up the oysters at least before it is too late.

Oldendorf [*who has seized the paper*] — Evidently the news is nothing but an uncertain rumor. Henning will tell us there is nothing in it. Don't see any ghosts, and sit down with us.

Bolz [*sitting down*] — I sit down, not because I believe your words, but because I won't give the breakfast the go-by. Bring Henning here : he shall explain.

Oldendorf — But you just heard he is not at home.

Bolz [*eating zealously*] — Oh, thou wilt have a frightful awakening, little Orsini ! [*In "Lucretia Borgia."*] — Bellmaus, pour for me. — But if the story is not true, if this Coriolanus has lied, by this purple in the glass be it sworn, I will be his murderer ! The fiercest revenge that ever an insulted journalist took shall fall upon his head ; he shall bleed to death from pin-pricks ; every cur on the street shall look contemptuously at him and say, "Pah, Coriolanus, I wouldn't accept a morsel from you, even if it were a sausage." [*Knocking: BOLZ lays down his knife.*] *Memento mori!* There are our grave-diggers. — Yet the last oyster, and then farewell, thou beautiful world !

Enter COUNSELOR SCHWARZ and SENDEN, from door at left; the door remains open.

Schwarz — Your obedient servant, gentlemen.

Senden — Pardon us if we disturb you.

Bolz [*sitting at the table*] — Not in the least. This is our customary breakfast, supplied by contract for a year, fifty oysters and two bottles daily for each member of the staff. Whoever buys the paper must provide it.

Schwarz — What brings us here, Professor, is a communication Mr. Henning should have made to you first. He has preferred to commission me with it.

Oldendorf — I await your communication.

Schwarz — Mr. Henning yesterday transferred to me by purchase all rights which appertained to him as owner of the *Union* newspaper.

Oldendorf — To you, counselor?

Schwarz — I admit that I have only bought it as agent for a third party. Here is the deed of sale: there is no secret about it. [*Passes over a paper.*]

Oldendorf [*looking through it, says to BOLZ*] — It is a legal contract in due form; — sold for thirty thousand thalers. [*Agitation among the staff.*] Allow me to get at the nub of this business. With this change of ownership is there to be connected a change in the political attitude of the paper?

Senden [*coming forward*] — Certainly, Professor; that was the object of the purchase.

Oldendorf — Perhaps I see in you the new proprietor?

Senden — Not that, but I have the honor to be a friend of his. You yourself, as well as these gentlemen, have the right to demand the fulfillment of your contracts. Your contracts, I understand, call for a half-year's notice: of course you continue to draw your salaries till the expiration of that time.

Bolz [*rising*] — You are very liberal, Mr. Von Senden. Our contracts give us the right to edit the paper entirely according to our own judgment, and to control its attitude as well as its party standing independently. Until the expiration of the next half-year, therefore, we shall not only continue to draw our salaries, but also to conduct the paper itself for the best good of the party to which you have not the honor to belong.

Senden [*hotly*] — We will find means of preventing it.

Oldendorf — Calm yourselves. Such a performance would be hardly worthy of us. I announce, under such circumstances, that I resign the editorship from to-day, and release you from all obligations toward me.

Bolz — Be it so as far as I am concerned. I announce the same.

Bellmaus }
Kämpfe } We too!
Körner }

Senden [*to SCHWARZ*] — We are witnesses that the gentlemen voluntarily forego their rights.

Bolz [*to the staff*] — Stop, gentlemen, don't be too magnanimous. It is very proper for you to have no further connection with the paper when your friends withdraw. But why give up your money claims on the new owner?

Bellmaus — I would rather accept nothing from them; I will do as you do.

Bolz [*patting him*] — Well thought, my son. We'll strike out in the world together. What do you say to a hand-organ, Bellmaus? We'd trudge about to the fairs with it and sing your songs; I grind, you sing.

Oldendorf — As neither of you has become owner of the paper, you cannot but think it a natural question, at the close of this business, Whom have we transferred our rights to?

Senden — The present owner of the paper is —

Enter COLONEL, from side door at the left.

Oldendorf [*stepping back, horrified*] — Colonel!

Bolz — Ah, this thing is getting high tragedy now.

Colonel [*approaching OLDENDORF*] — First of all, Professor, be assured that I am a stranger to this whole transaction, and come here only at the wish of the purchaser. Only right here have I learned what was in the wind. I hope you will believe that of me.

Bolz — But I find this play unbecoming, and I insist on knowing who the new proprietor is, that keeps in such close hiding behind various persons.

Enter ADELHEID, from side door at left.

Adelheid — He stands before you.

Bolz — I want to faint.

Bellmaus — This is a tremendous joke.

Adelheid [*bowing*] — Good morning, gentlemen! [*To the staff.*] Am I right in supposing these gentlemen have been employed in editorial duty up to now?

Bellmaus [*eagerly*] — Just so, my dear madam! Mr. Kämpe as leader-writer, Mr. Körner on the French and English correspondence, and I on the theatre, music, art, and all that sort of thing.

Adelheid — I shall be very glad if your principles will allow you to still confer your talent on my paper.

[*The three assistant editors bow.*]

Bellmaus [*laying his hand on his heart*] — Dear 'madam, under your editorship till the end of the world!

Adelheid [*smiling and courteous*] — Oh no — only in that room. [*Points to door at right.*] I need half an hour to collect myself for my new work.

Bellmaus [*going*] — This will be a capital story !

[*Exeunt* BELLMAUS, KÄMPE, and KÖRNER.]

Adelheid — Professor, you have resigned the management of the paper with a willingness that charms me. [*Significantly.*] *I wish to conduct the "Union" my way.* [*Seizes his hand and leads him to the COLONEL.*] Colonel, he is no longer editor ; we have outwitted him ; you have your satisfaction.

Colonel [*extending his arms*] — Come, Oldendorf. — Ever since the hour of our separation I have been sorry for what has happened.

Oldendorf — My honored friend !

Adelheid [*pointing to door at left*] — There is some one else in there who wants to share in the reconciliation. Perhaps it is Mr. Gabriel Henning.

Ida [*at side door*] — Edward !

[*OLDENDORF hurries to the door. IDA meets him, he embraces her. Exeunt both to the left, the COLONEL follows.*]

Adelheid [*politely*] — Before I try to interest you in the editing of the paper, Mr. Von Senden, I beg you to read through this correspondence I have received as a contribution to my paper.

Senden [*casting a glance at it*] — Madam, I don't know whose indiscretion —

Adelheid — Don't have any fears about me : I am a newspaper owner, and [*meaningly*] shall keep the secrets of the editorial sanctum. [*SENDEN bows.*] May I ask you for the deed, counselor ? And will the gentlemen have the goodness to pacify the seller over the outcome of the business ?

[*They bow. Exeunt* SENDEN and SCHWARZ. ADELHEID and BOLZ alone.]

Adelheid [*after a short pause*] — Now, Mr. Bolz, what shall I do with you ?

Bolz — I am prepared for anything ; nothing surprises me any more. — If the next thing some one should devote a capital of a hundred millions to painting all negroes with white oil colors, or making Africa four-cornered, it wouldn't surprise me. If I wake up to-morrow as a horned owl, with two tufts of feathers instead of ears, and a mouse in my beak, I'll be content, and remember that still worse things have happened.

Adelheid — What ails you, Konrad : are you dissatisfied with me ?

Bolz — With you ? You have been as magnanimous as ever : only too magnanimous ! And all would be very fine if only this whole scene had not been possible. That Senden !

Adelheid — He won't come again. — Konrad, I stand by the party !

Bolz — Triumph ! I hear countless angels blowing trumpets ! I stay with the *Union* !

Adelheid — I have nothing more to do with that. For I must make one more confession to you : I am not the real owner of the paper either.

Bolz — You are not ? — Now, by all the gods, I am at the end of my rope, this owner is gradually becoming indifferent to me. Be he man, will-o'-the-wisp, or Beelzebub himself, I bid him defiance !

Adelheid — He is a kind of will-o'-the-wisp, he is a little of a devil, and from head to foot he is a great rogue. For, Konrad, my friend, lover of my youth, it is you yourself ! [*Gives him the deed.*]

Bolz [*motionless awhile, reads*] — “Assigned to Konrad Bolz” — legal form ! — Then it's a kind of gift. — Can't be accepted : much too small. [*Throws the paper aside.*] Discretion, begone ! [*Falls on his knees before ADELHEID.*] Here I kneel, Adelheid ! I don't know what I am saying for joy, for the whole room is dancing about me. If you would take me for your husband, you would do me the greatest favor in the world ! If you don't want me, then give me a slap in the face and drive me out.

Adelheid [*bending towards him*] — I do want you ! [*Kissing him.*] It was this cheek.

Bolz [*jumping up*] — And it's this mouth. [*Kisses her ; they hold each other in an embrace during a short pause.*]

Enter COLONEL, IDA, and OLDENDORF.

Colonel [*at the door in astonishment*] — What's this ?

Bolz — Colonel, this is done under editorial responsibility.

Colonel — Adelheid, what do I see ?

Adelheid [*extending her hand to the COLONEL*] — My friend, the bride of a journalist ! .

[*While IDA and OLDENDORF hasten to the pair from both sides, the curtain falls.*]

KING RENÉ'S DAUGHTER.

A DANISH LYRICAL DRAMA.

BY HENRIK HERTZ.

(Translated by Theodore Martin.)

[HENRIK HERTZ was born in Copenhagen of Jewish parents, August 22, 1798; early orphaned, he was brought up by a relation, a prominent editor. He studied law, and was called to the bar, but scarcely practiced, being a born man of letters. Like most of his stamp where there is a state theater, he began with drama, producing among others "Buchardt and His Family" (1827), "Love and Policy," and "Cupid's Strokes of Genius" (1830). In the latter year, an anonymous publication of his, "Letters from a Ghost," — ostensibly from the dead Baggesen who had fought romanticism bitterly, but showing that he had become more enlightened, and an excellent imitation of his style, — made an immense hit; and Hertz, though not then acknowledging it, was encouraged to go on with a volume of essays, entitled "Nature and Art," "Four Letters of Knut the Seelander," a poem called "Tyrfing," etc. Returning also to the stage, he produced "The Savings Bank," a very successful comedy still in possession of the stage; "Svend Dyring's House" (1838), a rather tragic story taken from the old ballads but with a happy ending; and in 1845 his masterpiece, "King René's Daughter," which had enormous success at once, is a classic still holding the stage, and one of the world's literary gems. In 1848 he produced the tragedy "Ninon." He died February 25, 1870.]

CHARACTERS.

KING RENÉ of Provence.
IOLANTHE, his daughter.
COUNT TRISTAN of Vaudemont.
SIR GEOFFREY of Orange.

SIR ALMERIK.
EBN JAHIA, a Moorish physician.
BERTRAND.
MARTHA, his wife.

The scene lies in Provence, in a valley of Vaucluse, and lasts from midday to sunset. Time: the middle of the fifteenth century.

To the left (of the actor) stands a house of one story, covered with ivy and roses, its windows shaded by verandas. A garden runs backward from the house, in which the vegetation displays a tropical luxuriance. Some date palms in the foreground. At the end of the garden is seen a wall of rock, overgrown with brushwood, and in it a door so covered with moss and stones that it is only perceptible when open. Behind this wall, lofty mountains stretch into the distance.

PLAY IN ONE ACT.

SCENE I.

Bertrand [*entering from the house*]—

It was the bell! Some message from the king!

[*Crosses the stage to the rock, and opens the concealed door. Returns immediately with SIR ALMERIK, but keeps him standing at the entrance.*

Sir Almerik! You here! Stand back! Nay, not a step!

No stranger enters here.

Almerik—

I must and will!

Bertrand—

No, not a foot, by heavens! You have deceived me.
Hearing the bell, and with it too the sign,
I felt assured that it must be Raoul.

Almerik—

The king has sent me hither in his stead.
See here this letter, and his royal ring.

Bertrand—

His ring? 'Tis so. A letter! By your leave?

[*Reads*]—

“Frankly confide in Almerik, and give him
Whatever information he desires.”
This changes matters quite. Frown not, my lord;
For if you know the secret of this place,
Then you must know that prudence is my duty.

Almerik [*advancing with BERTRAND to the front of the stage*]—

I know the place's secret? Save the mark!
I find myself here to my own surprise,
And all I see augments my wonderment,
A very paradise amid the waste!
Read me the mystery.

Bertrand—

How! from the king

Did you not learn it?

Almerik—

Nay, not I!

Bertrand—

So, so!

If he was silent, I must needs be dumb.

Almerik—

Nay, nay, you jest!

Bertrand—

I never jested less.

Martha [*appearing at the door of the house*]—

Sir Almerik?

Bertrand — He brings King René's ring,
And knows the sign to gain admittance here,
But nothing more. He must at once begone.

Almerik —
Begone, when the king sends me ?

Bertrand — Aye, although he did.

Martha —
Stay, Bertrand, stay !

[*To ALMERIK*] — What is your message, sir ?

Almerik —
I was to say, that in an hour the king
Would come with his physician, Ebn Jahia.

Martha —
The very famous Moor, I know him well —

Almerik —
Comes with the king, and you were to make sure —
These were his words — that all things were prepared
As the leech ordered you.

Bertrand — 'Tis well — 'tis well !
The king may trust to us. Some hours ago
Was Ebn Jahia here.

Martha — And yet, Sir Knight,
His Majesty imparted nothing more ?

Almerik —
He was in haste, and full, meseemed, of thought.
The Moor — this Ebn Jahia — had arrived,
Raoul was ill, and secretly the king
Called me aside. "I can depend on you,"
He said, "and in your secrecy confide !
Follow the messenger, who will conduct you,
And then fulfill your charge."

Martha — And this was all
Was told you by the king ?

Almerik — Not all ; and yet,
What more he spake was wrapped in mystery.
He mused awhile, then, hesitating, said :
"Look you ! I count on your fidelity ;
You'll find my daughter, where you are to go."
Then all at once he suddenly broke off,
Penned in keen haste the letter which I brought,
And bade me go.

Martha — The letter ?

Bertrand — Oh, yes ! The letter !

Martha [*takes and reads the letter*] —

'Tis the king's hand. How can you doubt his tale ?

Bertrand —

No, you are right; I had forgot the letter.

Almerik —

Then from the letter you may gather how
The king desires that from your lips I learn
What things soe'er 'tis needful I should know.
Who is this daughter that he told me of?
Margaret is now in Britain, and Iolanthe —

Martha —

Is here.

Almerik — Here? Iolanthe is in Spain,
Reared in a convent since her infancy.

Martha —

Not so, Sir Knight; she's here, and has been ever.

Almerik —

How? Here! I prithee, Bertrand, tell me all!

Bertrand —

You oft, no doubt, have heard of the dispute
About Lorraine, that raged so long between
Our king and Vaudemont.

Almerik — I know it well.

Yet is that ancient quarrel now forgot.
The terms of peace, by Burgundy arranged,
Secure — as rumor gives the story out —
King René's daughter's hand in marriage to
The son of Count Antonio Vaudemont.
This daughter, Iolanthe, was a child
When this alliance was determined on.

Bertrand —

'Twas even as you say; but, good Sir Knight,
The compact scarce was settled when, by fire,
The palace was consumed at dead of night,
And Iolanthe — then a one-year's babe —
Had all but perished in the flames.

To save

Her life, one course, and one alone, was left:
We from the chamber window let her down,
And caught her safe on cushions as she fell.
Yet, or through fear or injury from the fall,
Suffice to say, the child had lost her sight.

Almerik —

Had lost her sight?

Martha —

Aye, even so, my lord.

Imagine our distress — her sire's despair.

Alas! a child so gentle and so sweet,

And of her sight bereft — how sad! how hard!
 The hope, that with her life was intertwined,
 Extinguished, and the old and bitter feud
 About Lorraine renewed — aye, and renewed
 Too sure, alas! more fiercely than of old.
 For the Count Vaudemont will never brook
 His son should have a blind girl for his mate.
 He will believe, and hence his wrath will fire,
 A cheat was practiced on him, and that she
 " Was blind before the truce was ratified.

Almerik —

Surmise to him most probable. But the king,
 What did he in this strait?

Bertrand —

At first he veiled
 In studious silence that the child was blind,
 Which none had e'er discovered from her looks;
 But soon from Cordova he summoned hither
 The very famed physician, Ebn Jahia,
 Whose skill is counted nigh miraculous,
 Who came and tried all sorts of remedies.
 With sagest counsel, too, he showed us how
 To rear her up in tender fosterage;
 And, last of all, he in the stars perused
 Her horoscope.

Almerik —

And there?

Martha —

Found hope for us
 That Iolanthe should regain her sight
 When in her sixteenth year. That time is come,
 And Ebn Jahia now is with the king.
 He orders remedies, which we apply,
 Yet what their purpose I have never known;
 The hour, he says, hath even now arrived.
 Heaven grant it may be so!

Almerik —

But Iolanthe!
 How heavily her fate must weigh her down!

Martha —

She has no thought that she is blind.

Almerik —

No thought that she is blind! You surely jest!

Martha —

Ah, no, Sir Knight! you very soon may learn
 That all which I have told you now is true.
 But let me earnestly beseech you, sir,
 When you converse with Iolanthe, still
 To guard your lips with most religious care,

That so no syllable shall cross their bounds,
Which to the eye bears slightest reference.
This is the strict injunction laid on all
Who come within these precincts. Nothing name
Which through the power of vision must be known;
Speak not before her of the light of day,
Nor of the moonbeams in the placid night,
Nor of its thousand stars. Alas! no stars
Illumine the lasting night wherein she dwells!

Almerik —

And have you kept subservience to this rule?

Bertrand —

We schooled ourselves from her most tender years,
When there was little danger had we failed.

Almerik —

With what intent has it been hid from her
That she is blind? Who willed it should be so?

Martha —

We know not whether 'twas the king's resolve,
Or whether Ebn Jahia so advised;
Yet I can easily explain the cause.
A coronet shall one day deck her brow,
As you are 'ware; so does her future hold
A brilliant promise forth, should all go well.
But it is feared the consciousness of blindness
Might settle deep into her tender soul,
Untune her spirit, and from her senses take
Their equipoise, and that clear cheerfulness,
Which are a throne's most beauteous ornaments.
This consciousness 'tis purposed to avert.

Almerik —

This is the reason, then, why she lives here,
Secluded from the world and all who might
Betray to her the secret of her loss?

Bertrand —

'Tis even so. This valley, locked within
The heart of yonder mountains of Vaucluse,
Is from the eye of all intruders safe.
You know, it is King René's chief delight
To tend and cultivate his plants and flowers.
Thus all you see was by himself arranged;
And with the trees and shrubs his daughter grew.
Here knows she every spot — unerringly
Can find her way about without a guide.
Nor has her education been o'erlooked;

She weaves, spins, tends her garden plots, and is
 Forever occupied, and ever cheerful.
 Songs makes she too, and sings at leisure hours.

Almerik —

Makes songs ?

Bertrand — Aye, she makes songs. The king himself
 Taught her the cunning of the troubadours ;
 And ne'er a master of them all need blush
 To own the verses which her fancy weaves.

Almerik —

All this I can explain and understand ;
 Yet how she ne'er suspects her blindness, I
 Can scarce conceive. No — this must be delusion !

Martha —

Such it appears to you, whose eyesight serves
 As a sure guide to every step you take.
 Involuntarily you turn your gaze
 Towards every sound that stirs. Even in the dark,
 The accustomed light with fancied gleam deceives you ;
 But he who, from his earliest infancy,
 From birth, mayhap, hath lacked the power of sight,
 How shall he deem his fellow-creatures see ?
 What's sight to him ? What can he comprehend
 Of all that wondrous power that's in the eye ?
 Yet, as with ease we master by its aid
 All that surrounds us, so the blind do hold
 Hearing, touch, feeling, the air's soft impress,
 And other means innumerable, at command,
 Which are to us incomprehensible.
 This shall yourself observe, as I have said,
 Before you have been long with Iolanthe.

Almerik —

Now, by the mass, I long to see this wonder !
 Yet one thing more, that puzzles me, explain :
 She lives alone with you, apart from all ;
 Is this secluded valley all her world ?

Bertrand —

You err, to think that Iolanthe is
 So lonely, so forlorn. Behind these mountains
 Lies, as you know, the convent of St. Clara ;
 And oftentimes the abbess and the nuns
 Come here to visit her : her father, too,
 Brings with him stranger guests from time to time.

Almerik —

And, so she lacks for naught, and is content

If but some stranger on occasion come?
 Of all the wealth the world to us presents,
 Of all its glories, she surmiseth naught?
 Does she not question you?

Martha — . That is a point
 On which 'tis not so easy to reply.
 It may be she suppresses many a thought.
 She knows there is an entrance to this vale,
 Hears the bell sound when any one arrives,
 Brightens to hear it, and in silence waits,
 With ear intent. Yet doth she never ask
 Where is the entrance, whitherward it leads;
 For she has heard that there are many things
 She must not ask, but leave to years to teach.
 So 'tis with children. Speak to them of God,
 Of power omnipotent, of another life,
 And mark how they will listen, opening wide
 Their little eyes in wonder, as some doubt —
 A passing shade — is painted on their looks;
 And then, at last, with touching faith, accept
 For truth the things they may not comprehend.
 So now for Iolanthe the whole world
 Is one vast mystery, which she oft would pierce.
 Then will her father or the abbess say,
 "Rest thee content, my child — thou art too young;
 Some future time thou'lt comprehend it all."
 In this she piously confides; nor dreams
 She wants the eyes' clear sight to compass all
 The splendors of this goodly universe.
 May it not be, sir, while we darkly muse
 Upon our life's mysterious destinies,
 That we in blindness walk, like Iolanthe,
 Unconscious that true vision is not ours?
 Yet is that faith our hope's abiding star.

Almerik —
 In this, good Martha, hast thou truly spoken.
 But tell me, where is Iolanthe now?

Bertrand —
 She sleeps.

Almerik — How! Sleeps! And now?

Bertrand — For just one hour,
 By the physician's order, every day.
 Yes, 'tis no soft and natural sleep; indeed,
 I'm puzzled sorely what to think of it.
 By strange and uncouth words, and singular signs,

Does Ebn Jahia charm her to repose;
 Then doth he place upon her breast a stone,
 A talisman or amulet, belike,
 And only when he has removed the gem,
 Does she awake again. I will confess,
 This troubles me.

Almerik — Yet may we strongly trust
 In Ebn Jahia's skill.

Bertrand — There lies my hope.
[*The bell rings.*]

Martha —
 Bertrand, the bell!

Bertrand — Nay, then, it is the king.
[*Exit through the concealed door.*]

Almerik —
 Comes the king often hither?

Martha — Yes, when he
 Has fixed his quarters at the neighboring palace,
 We see him frequently. At times, however,
 Whole months will pass without his coming here.

Almerik —
 Knows Iolanthe, then, it is the king?

Martha —
 No, she does not, and that is well remembered.
 She has no thought of that. She calls him father,
 We others call him Raynbaud — such the name
 Of one that was a famous troubadour.

Almerik —
 Break off! The king!

SCENE II.

KING RENÉ, EBN JAHIA, and BERTRAND enter through the concealed door. ALMERIK, MARTHA.

René — Martha, I bring thee here
 Good Ebn Jahia. As I learn, he hath
 Been here to-day already once before.
 How goes it now?

Martha — Even to a wish, my liege.

René —
 All that the leech enjoined thou hast fulfilled?
 Neglected nothing? Has Iolanthe lain
 With eyes close bandaged every night?

Martha — She has.

René [*to EBN JAHIA*] —

That was a perilous venture. It is strange
 She bears it. Yet the chance was fortunate
 That the bee stung her on the temple lately;
 This served us for a plausible pretext.
 Ah! sure the little bee deceived itself.
 In this fair world, that's tended by her care,
 Where, like a flower, she grows amidst her flowers,
 The insect, dazzled by the flagrant bloom,
 Deemed that it nestled in a rose's bud.
 Forgive me! It is sinful thus to speak
 Of mine own child. But now no more of this.
 Thou long'st to see the fruitage of thy skill.
 Go, then, to Iolanthe. Bertrand! Martha!
 Follow him in; perchance he may require you.

[*EBN JAHIA exit into the house, followed by BERTRAND and MARTHA.*

Now, Almerik, tell me, wert thou not amazed
 To see this valley so serene and still?
 Was it not so — a little paradise?

Almerik —

Indeed it is!

René —

Oh, had it been my fate,
 Here, in the midst of all that most I love,
 Of beauty, science, art, to spend my days,
 How gladly then had I foregone, forever,
 Naples, Lorraine, and this long, bitter strife
 With Vaudemont!

Almerik —

This strife is now healed up,
 And you expect Count Tristan here ere long.
 Then all shall end in peace.

René —

I hope it may!
 And this my hope has daily gained in strength.
 I told you — did I not? — that I expected
 Geoffrey of Orange. He resided long
 At Tristan's castle. The Count's teacher he
 In minstrelsy and poetry and song.
 The youthful Count, so Geoffrey tells me, owns
 A happy turn for poesy — a sense
 Refined and gentle, with a mind of rare
 Endowment and capacity of thought.
 He sang to me a Sirventese, writ
 By Tristan, nobly felt, and couched in words
 Of a rare beauty. This I needs must own,
 Though he be minded hostilely to me,

And would with grasping hand usurp Lorraine.
But hush! I hear a voice.

[*Goes to the house and looks in at the door*] —

See, Ebn Jahia

Has wakened her! Slowly her eyes she raises;
She speaks — yet speaks as in a dream, while he
Looks down observantly into her eyes.
Now doth he lay the amulet once more
Upon her bosom — and she sleeps again.

Almerik —

How singular!

René — Most singular! This Moor
Possesses powers that fill me with alarm.
He comes. Now leave us, Almerik. Yet stay!
Hence to the palace. Here I must remain.
Soon as a letter comes from Tristan, haste
And bring it here to me.

Almerik —

Adieu, my liege.

[*Exit as EBN JAHIA enters from the house.*]

René —

My Ebn Jahia, com'st thou like the dove
That bears the olive branch? Thou lookest grave,
And, as thou art, unfathomable all.
How shall I construe what thy looks impart?

Ebn Jahia —

I have the strongest hopes, my noble liege.

René —

Is't so? Oh, thou'rt an angel sent from heaven!
Thy dusky visage, like that royal Moor's
Who knelt beside our great Redeemer's cradle,
Heralds the star shall cheer my night of gloom.
Say, Jahia, say whereon thy hope is based?
What is thy counsel, what thy purpose?

Speak!

'Tis written in a book, which late I read,
That oftentimes an unsound eye is cured
By application of the surgeon's knife.
This thou wilt never try, my Ebn Jahia;
Thou know'st the eye is a most noble part,
And canst not gain such mastery o'er thyself
As to approach my Iolanthe's eyes
With instrument of steel. Nay, thou must dread
To mar the beauty of their azure depths,
That dark, deep fount, which still, though saddened o'er,
Wells forth such glorious radiance. Oh! her eyes,

How is it possible that night should brood
On two fair orbs of such transcendent sheen ?

Ebn Jahia —

Nay, be at ease ! You need not fear for this.
'Twould aid us little, should I have recourse
To instruments.

René —

What is thy purpose, then ?

Ebn Jahia —

Your pardon, good my lord ! my treatment is
A mystery, like all my leech's craft ;
It scarce would serve my purpose to divulge it.
'Tis not the fruitage of a moment's growth ;
No, but the slow result of wakeful years,
Shaped — step by step conducted to one point,
Whereat, so speed it, Heaven ! it shall succeed ;
Aye, and succeed it must, this very day,
Or fail forever.

René —

How ! This very day ?

Ebn Jahia —

Soon as the sun has sunk beneath the hills,
And a soft twilight spreads along the vale,
Such as her eyes, still to the light unused,
May bear with safety, I will test my plan.

René —

Ah, Ebn Jahia, prithee, not to-day !
From day to day, from hour to hour, have I,
With restless eagerness, looked onward for
This moment ; and alas ! now it hath come,
My heart grows faint, and wishes it away.
Think what I peril ! When the sun goes down,
My fairest hope, perchance, goes down with it.
Thou'rt wrapt in thought. Art thou content to pause ?

Ebn Jahia —

I will not wait.

René —

Then tell me, dost thou fear ?

Art thou not certain of the issue ? Thou
Didst put to question yonder silent stars,
From which thy potent art can wring response.
What was their answer ? tell me, Ebn Jahia.
The horoscope — was't happy ?

Ebn Jahia —

Yes, it was.

I told you so already. Yet the stars
Inclinant, non necessitant. They influence
The fortunes of mankind, yet do they not
Rule Nature's laws with absolute control.

Rest thee at ease ; I have no fear for this.
Another hindrance menaces my skill.

René —

A hindrance ?

Ebn Jahia — One, my liege, I apprehend,
Which you will find it hard to obviate.
Iolanthe, ere I bend me to my task,
Must comprehend what she till now has lacked —
Must learn this very day that she is blind.

René —

No, Ebn Jahia, no ; this cannot be !

Ebn Jahia —

It must be, or my skill is powerless.

René —

No, no ! oh, never ! never ! Thou wilt not
Constrain me to this monstrous cruelty,
And strip her all at once, with sudden wrench,
Of that unconsciousness has been her blessing ;
Not slowly, by degrees, but all at once,
Force on her tender soul this fearful truth ?
And if the cure should fail us after all ?
Hast thou forgot how we, year after year,
With care almost incredible, have watched
To keep from her this melancholy truth ?
This course thyself suggested, showing me
The difficult road which I was bound to follow.
Now, wilt thou raze the fabric thou hast reared ?
Say, wherefore, wherefore ?

Ebn Jahia —

I will tell you wherefore,

So please you lend a favoring ear the while.
You deem, belike, our sense of vision rests
Within the eye ; yet is it but a means.
From the soul's depths the power of vision flows,
And those fine nerves, that on the eye converge,
From the brain's secret workshop emanate.
Iolanthe must be conscious of her state —
Her inward eye must first be opened ere
The light can pour upon the outward sense.
A want must be developed in her soul ;
A feeling that anticipates the light —
A craving sense ; for know, my noble liege,
That nothing e'er is on mankind bestowed,
Unless for it he feel necessity.
Deep in his soul a yearning must arise
For a contentment, which it strives to win.

Let me, for you, exemplar, take from what
 Your studies make familiar. That fair art —
 That joyous science of sweet poesy,
 Which is so widely famed throughout Provence —
 Mankind receive it by the Muses' favor:
 Is it not so? But how? Do all receive it?
 No; only he within whose bosom dwelt,
 As in a dream, a bright poetic world,
 And who hath yearned for it with quenchless love.

René —

I'll not contest with thee, good Ebn Jahia!
 I may not cope with thee in lore profound;
 Yet pity's voice speaks loudly in my heart,
 And drowns thy arguments with mightier tones.
 I cannot do it! No, it may not be!

Ebn Jahia —

E'en as you will. I only can advise,
 And if you will not trust to my advice,
 Then I am useless here. So, fare ye well!
 Hence to the convent, I! There you will find me,
 If your resolve shall alter. Yet, bothink you:
 Sink but the sun behind yon mountain tops,
 My utmost skill cannot again avail.

[Exit through the concealed door.]

René —

Oh, dreadful strait! And I so dearly bought
 A hope, which yet so soon may be undone!
 Shall I destroy at once her cheerful mood,
 Convert it into comfortless despair,
 And see her youth grow pale by slow degrees,
 Wither and die in mournful consciousness?
 No! This is Jahia's obstinacy merely;
 He yet shall yield. I will not rest until
 He hears me, and submits to my desire.

[Exit after EBN JAHIA as MARTHA and BERTRAND enter.]

Martha —

The king gone hence, and, as it seemed, in wrath,
 And Ebn Jahia nowhere to be seen!
 What has occurred?

Bertrand —

Indeed, Heaven only knows!
 Yet am I ill at ease, as matters stand:
 And Ebn Jahia, I do fear me much,
 Will fail us at the last.

Martha —

Nay, think ye so?

Bertrand —

Heaven grant that I be wrong! Yet like I not
The dark and moody nature of the man;
And, to be frank with you, I feel a dread
Of one endowed with such mysterious power.
There lies the child upon her couch, as though
Life were extinct; one motion of his hand,
And sleep, as if by magic, seals her eyes.
This is not, cannot come to good!

Martha —

Content thee,

Nor thus torment thyself with causeless fears.
Thou knowest well, that when her sleep is o'er,
And from her breast the amulet removed,
She beams afresh in bright and blooming health.
Is it not marvelous, how this strange sleep
Strengthens her more, much more, than sleep at night —
Gives vigor, and enlivens every sense?
Yea, even her eyes, as I have noted oft,
Are deepened in their luster when she wakes,
As though the rays of light had found a way
Into their orbs, while she lay slumbering:
This is, I trust, a favorable sign.

Bertrand —

Well, well, thou may'st be right; and time will show! —
Let us away! Much yet is to be done
Among our people yonder in the field.
We may withdraw from Iolanthe now:
She sleeps, and cannot wake till our return.

[*Exeunt behind the house.*]

SCENE III.

TRISTAN of Vaudemont, GEOFFREY of Orange, each with a cithern
slung upon his shoulder.

Geoffrey [stopping in front of the concealed door] —

Look to your steps! 'tis dark as at midnight here!

Tristan —

Push onward! Stay — here is a door!

Geoffrey —

A door?

Tristan —

Patience! A bolt — it yields! What do I see?

[*Both enter.*]

Geoffrey —

Heavens! What a gust of exquisite perfume!

Tristan —

A garden ! Here — shrined in the mountain waste !
What beauty, too, — what order ! Only look !

Geoffrey —

I am amazed !

Tristan —

What man is he that owns
This witching spot ? You know the country well,
And dwell hard by.

Geoffrey —

Indeed, I cannot say.
Of such a paradise I never dreamed.
A garden of the tropics — studded o'er
With all rare flowers ! Behold the lofty palms !

Tristan —

The mansion rising through — how beautiful !
Half hid with ivy and the clambering rose !
And yet, its inmates ?

Geoffrey —

Not a soul see I.
I could be sworn, this paradise arose
In some fair summer night, when Dian gave
One golden hour to her Endymion,
Veiling beneath these rocks their fearful joys !
But its inhabitants have taken flight.

Tristan —

Nay, here be many signs of human hands,
Fair, I'll be sworn, and gentle. Here — see here
Fresh footmarks on the pathway !

Geoffrey —

You are right.
A tiny foot and dainty ! Let us on !
By following this we scarce can go amiss.
Observe, it leads right onwards to the house !

Tristan —

No, let us wait till somebody appears.
We should be most discourteous. Bad enough
That we have come thus far without consent !

Geoffrey —

Well, as you please. So our luck fails us not,
I'll tax my courtesy, and wait in patience,
For, in good sooth, luck hath been ours indeed —
Hath it not, Tristan ? See, how things have fallen :
As near the convent idly on we strolled,
Whiling the time with interchange of song,
I chanced to spy King René passing near,
Rapt in close talk with the Cordovan leech.
To 'scape his glance, you drag me after you,
And, hurrying on o'er rock and wilderness,

Here, at the mountain's base, we chance upon
 Yon secret passage, craftily contrived.
 Following it up, awhile we grope about
 In darkness, and, in short, have landed here.
 But tell me, now, what motive prompted you
 So to avoid the king? To meet him, 'twas
 That you came here. You urged me to attend
 Upon you at the interview to-morrow;
 And you — 'tis known familiarly to all —
 You have been long affianced to his daughter.

Tristan —

Affianced! Yes, they say so! Yet was I
 Scarce nine years old when I was thus betrothed.
 My father made the terms with Burgundy,
 When we a truce concluded with the king.
 But, Geoffrey, now I'm grown to riper years;
 And as this contract, in the full career
 Of victory, wronged and robbed me of my rights,
 So on this marriage look I now with hate.
 Unwillingly I came; unwillingly
 In this vile business I am like to move.

Geoffrey —

I grieve to hear it, for King René's sake.
 For many a day, I know, his joy has been
 The goodly promise of these nuptial ties.

Tristan —

Goodly to him they may be, I believe.
 Know you his daughter?

Geoffrey —

No; she has been reared
 In some far Spanish convent, and came home
 Here to her father but to meet with you.
 But let us, friend, bethink us where we are!
 We forced our way in, and, it must be owned,
 The spot is charming. But the question now
 Is, can we quite as easily retire?

Tristan —

Nay, never fear.

Geoffrey —

Would you not, then, find out
 Whether this mansion hath inhabitants?
 Assail the door! — shall I, then?

Tristan —

Nay, let me!
 In case some demon lord it in this place.
 'Tis just, the danger first should light on me,
 Whose charge it was that lured you on to it.

[*Knocks at the door*] —

No — no one comes!

Geoffrey — Try if the door will open.

Tristan —

It gives not way.

Geoffrey — Press harder; it will yield!

Tristan —

So be it, then!

[*Opens the door*] — Heavens, Geoffrey, what a form!

Geoffrey —

Some spirit?

Tristan — How! A spirit? Yes, methinks

One of the radiant ministers of light!

Look!

Geoffrey [*looking in*] —

A fair girl upon a dainty couch

Surely she sleeps!

Tristan —

She sleeps. Her breathing heaves

Her bosom gently — gently sinks it down.

See, now a smile is hovering on her lips,

As though she dreant of our bewilderment.

Geoffrey —

I pray you, Tristan, let us fly from hence!

This witching vision doth disturb my soul —

Too witching all, and all too beautiful.

This is some wizard's castle — let us away!

Come! Mystic serpents threaten us, I know.

Tristan, where are you rapt? All heavenly powers!

He's charmed already! Rooted to the earth

He stands, and stares on her. Oh, Tristan, come!

Tristan —

Speak softly, Geoffrey, for a breath might wake her!

Speak softly! 'Twere a sin to break the calm,

The holy stillness, which her slumber sheds

On everything around!

Geoffrey —

Oh, hear me! hear me!

Tristan —

Hush! Not a word, I say! This place is holy!

[*Kneels, bending forward with outstretched arms towards the open door.*

Oh, be not angry, that with eyes profane

I have intruded on thy resting-place!

Geoffrey —

Rise up! I tremble for you! You are caught

In an enchanter's spell. The vision is

Some cheating phantom. Follow me!

Tristan —

I cannot.

Geoffrey —

Then do not kneel there like a marble block!
Tush! be a man. If hence you will not fly,
At least command your spirits! Let us learn
Who this fair creature is. Awake her!

Tristan —

No!

That were a sin!

Geoffrey —

If you will not, I will.

[*Enters.*

Tristan —

Audacious man! He calls to her — hark! hark!
How now — he clasps her hand —

Geoffrey [*rushing out*] —

Away! away!

She cannot wake. Her senses are enthralled
By some dark demon's necromantic spells.
Oh, come! I quake for fear! We've rudely broke
Into a holy place — 'twill be our death!

Tristan —

A holy place! You name it well. But it
Imports not death, but life. Well, well, no matter!
Come, let us quit this consecrated ground,
Which wrongly we intruded on. She sleeps.
It is unchivalrous to tarry —

Geoffrey —

Come!

Tristan —

Yet stay! I'll grant myself one little look,
One moment by her side, to scan her face,
Then follow you anon.

[*Enters.*

Geoffrey —

See there — he kneels!

Upon her hand imprints one gentle kiss.
How he surveys her! There — he hath unclasped
A ribbon from her neck, and bears it off!
Now, Heav'n be praised, he comes to me again.

Tristan [*returns*] —

Now have I graven deeply on my heart
Her beauteous form. It cannot vanish now.
Aye, let us hence, and dread this witchery!
Yet did I vow to seek this spot again,
And, if I erred not, with a gracious smile
She heard my vow, and blessed it in her dreams.
See, Geoffrey, I have ta'en this ornament,
A gem of price, that lay upon her breast.
Like Jesse's son, who from the sleeping Saul
Took of his robe a fragment, for a sign
That in his hands the monarch's life had been.
So may this jewel likewise testify

That I was here, and that my life was placed
Within her hand, even while she lay in sleep.
Come, Geoffrey!

[*Returns with GEOFFREY towards the concealed door, as IOLANTHE appears at the door of the house.*]

SCENE IV.

TRISTAN, GEOFFREY, IOLANTHE.

Notwithstanding IOLANTHE'S blindness, all her movements are unconstrained and decided. Only now and then a listening attitude, with a slight motion of the hand, as though she were feeling before her, betrays the want of sight. Her eyes are open, but frequently bent downwards, and with little motion in them.

Iolanthe [*at the door*] — Martha! Bertrand!

Tristan —

Ha! 'tis she!

Iolanthe —

Sure, some one spoke!

[*Advances*] —

Who's there?

Tristan —

A stranger, who

Implores forgiveness, that he rudely broke

Your and this place's sanctified repose.

Iolanthe —

Give me thy hand. Thou never hast been here!

Nor do I even know thy voice. Didst speak

With Bertrand or with Martha on the way?

Tristan —

I spoke with no one. Accident alone

Hath led me hither.

Geoffrey [*aside to TRISTAN*] —

Ask about Bertrand!

Iolanthe [*listening*] —

And whom hast thou brought with thee?

Tristan —

'Tis my friend,

A troubadour and knight, who dwells hard by.

Iolanthe —

You both are truly welcome. Will you not

Go in with me? 'Tis cool and fresher there.

Geoffrey [*quickly*] —

Nay, so you please, we'll tarry where we are.

[*Aside to TRISTAN*] —

'Tis safer so, methinks!

Iolanthe [*still holding TRISTAN'S hand*] — Thy hand is warm —
 I feel the pulse's throb. Hath not the heat
 Oppressed thee by the way? Art thou not thirsty?
 Wait, and I'll bring thee forth a cup of wine.

[*Goes into the house.*]

Tristan —

Oh, what a lovely being! What dignity,
 What gracious gentleness in every feature!
 And her sweet voice!

Geoffrey — A wondrous voice, indeed!
 That fascinates the heart at unawares,
 And binds it utterly in softest thrall!
 Of noble birth she is, beyond all question;
 Yet — some precaution cannot be amiss.
 Drink not the wine, dear Tristan, when it comes.

Tristan —

I would drink death, if from her hand, with joy!
 [*IOLANTHE comes back with a flagon and cup.*]

Iolanthe —

Here is the wine my father always drinks.
 It is too strong for me; but will you taste it?
 [*Fills the cup and presents it to TRISTAN.*]

Tristan [*as he drinks*] —

This to thy happiness, thou lovely maid!

Iolanthe —

Give now thy friend the cup, if he desires it.
 I will go gather fruit for you — some dates
 And grapes, or any other fruit you will.

[*Plucks fruit, and places it in a basket which she has taken from the table.*]

Tristan [*giving GEOFFREY the cup*] —

There, Geoffrey, drink!

Geoffrey —

Have you felt nothing strange —
 No lassitude — no — ?

Tristan —

Nothing. Never fear!

Geoffrey —

It is wine, then?

[*Drinks*] —

Right Malvoisie, by Heavens!
 No better drinks King René's self, I trow.

[*Drinks again*] —

Ha, what a wine! Where we such nectar find,
 In sooth, no demon can have mastery!

Iolanthe [*rejoins them*] —

Here I have fruits, so please you taste of them.
 I'll place them on the table.

Geoffrey —

Beauteous lady,

Already you so truly have refreshed us,
And in this cup have ministered a wine
So rare, and so delicious, we might deem,
And with best cause, our entertainment came
From some most wealthy, aye, and noble house.
Beauty and wine the loadstars are of song.
Then lend a friendly ear unto my words,
Which, lightly woven into a lay, unfold
At once our homage and our gratitude.

[*Sings, accompanying himself on his cithern*] —

The eagle we tell
By his sweep full well,
As proudly afar in the clouds he soars;
And the nightingale
By the trilling wail
Her throat in the dewy May time pours.

By valor and skill,
And a temperate will,
The knight approveth his worth to all;
And deftly to sing,
With sweet minstreling.
Makes troubadour honored in bower and hall.

[*Changes the measure.*]

But when amid gentles and ladies gay,
His echoing harp he raises,
And seeks by the flow of his tuneful lay
To win him their guerdons, their praises;
And when with the goblet the foot-page fine
His carol hath cheerly greeted,
Full soon doth he note, by the noble wine,
'Neath a noble's roof he's seated.

Iolanthe —

The song is beautiful, and doth bespeak
A cunning high and rare.

Tristan —

My friend is famed

Among Provence's younger troubadours.

Iolanthe [*to TRISTAN*] —

Art thou, too, gifted with the power of song?

Tristan —

Ah, I am but a novice; yet methinks
Your gentleness doth make me bold to sing.
Then pray you for the deed accept the will.

[Sings, preluding each verse with a few notes of the cithern] —

I came where the echoing city lay,
And over the mountains I took my way,
Weary and darkling, by rock and by lea;
When a valley burst suddenly on my sight,
Basking and beaming in sunshine bright,
And gemmed with all beautiful flowers that be.

Here all was still. No sweet bird's note
On my listening ear in the silence smote —
No sound, or of man or of life arose;
And, as in some temple's most sacred hall,
In this vale of enchantment fair seemed all
To be lulled for aye in a charmed repose.

A door flew wide, and a form of light
Beamed, like a star, on my wondering sight;
Like a dewy rosebud oppressed with sleep,
Which a wizard's wand had over it thrown,
Didst thou seem to me, thou lovely one,
And all things anear thee a hush did keep.

The zephyr dreams on thy pearly cheek,
The flame on the hearth burns faint and weak,
The palm trees drowsily droop their crest;
For all things have life through thee alone,
For all things will only be thine own,
And close their eyelids when thine do rest.

Thou didst awake, and a soul of life,
Through air, and through flower and grove, grew rife,
As though a sunbeam their sleep had broke!
Oh, gentle rose, take to thy heart,
As the homage pure of my faltering art,
The lay which thy beauty to being woke!

Iolanthe [to TRISTAN, after a pause, in which she stands absorbed, with her hand upon her forehead] —
Lend me the cithern.

[After preluding upon the instrument, she sings, accompanying herself with occasional chords] —

Highly be honored
The stranger guest,
Who comes with a blithesome
And cordial heart, —

KING RENÉ'S DAUGHTER.

Brings us a treasure
Of story and measure,
And fills us with silent and wondering pleasure!

Yet higher than all
Be honor to him,
The guest who doth bring us
Song linked to the lyre;
Who living thoughts, woven
In melody, pours,
And on winged words freely and joyously soars!

With the minstrel enters
An influence holy
Under our portals;
While that he singeth,
Listens the air,
Hushed are the flowerets,
And, lowly inclining,
Stay their sweet breathing to list to the strain.

You, O ye strangers,
You who came hither
With harp and with song,
With me dividing
Your soul's inspiration,
You do I thank!
Ah! I so feeble,
I could not fathom
All that you sang.
Novel and strange,
Strange as yourselves,
It swept me along, the light-winged song;

Here in the valley,
Deep in the thicket,
Oftentimes nestleth
A stranger bird;
And in the evening,
Dreamlike and still,
Her song from the leaves doth the nightingale trill.

No one can teach me
To sweep the guitar,
Till it throbs like her song.
No one can give me

Her rapturous strain,
That lifted my soul on its pinions again.

Whence, O ye strangers,
Cometh your song?
Say, is its home there,
Where, as I deem,
Fond aspirations,
Yearning and sighs,
In the slumberous silence of evening arise?

Say, have the airy
Tenants of ether
Taught you their strains?
Strains so enchanting,
Flowing so wildly;
Strains that have freighted
My dreams with delight;
Strains full of story,
Lifelike and clear;
Strains that gave glory
To all that is near!

Geoffrey —

What lofty poesy!

Tristan [to IOLANTHE] — To the nightingale

You have compared our song. Oh, were I but
The meanest, tiniest of yonder birds,
That build their nests anigh your dwelling-place,
And evermore might list the lovely strains
That do inspire your breast!

Geoffrey —

Oh, noble lady,
There is one question — pray you pardon it! —
Which musing wonder forces to my lips:
You live here from the world cut off, and none
Of all the knights and ladies of Provence
Your rare perfections e'er have heard or known;
What line so blest can claim you for its child —
And who your father?

Iolanthe —

How! Not know my father?
That gives me wonder; for none e'er come here
Who know not him.

Geoffrey —

I pray you, what his name?

Iolanthe —

The rest do call him Raymbaud.

Geoffrey — Raymbaud? Raymbaud?

Is he a knight?

Iolanthe — A knight?

Geoffrey — Or warrior?

Wears he a helm, and shield, and golden spurs?

What his pursuits?

Iolanthe — That have I ne'er inquired.

Geoffrey —

Why are you pent up here so close?

Iolanthe [*surprised*] — So close?

Geoffrey —

Aye, close and lonely?

Iolanthe — Lonely I am not.

There you do much mistake.

Geoffrey — Yet no one's here?

Iolanthe —

No, no one's here. You're right; I cannot guess

How this should be. I never am alone.

But only wait, and I will summon Bertrand.

He will be truly glad that you are come.

[*Exit into the house.*]

Geoffrey —

Now 'twill be seen who is this valley's lord.

Yet can I not subdue the rising thought

That some dark mystery is here on foot,

Which he that owns this valley will be loath

That we should pry into. You cannot fail

To note how cunningly yon door is covered

With moss, and stones, and branches, that, when closed,

It scarce may be distinguished from the rock.

Take my advice, and tarry near the door.

I will but wait till some one comes, and then

Betake me straightway to the mountain pass,

To keep the entrance clear for our escape.

Some of your people I may chance to meet.

Should aught appear amiss, I will return

Upon the moment. Do you hear me, Tristan?

Tristan —

Aye, aye! Go, go! There!

Geoffrey — Is your heart enchained?

Has this young beauty quite enchanted you?

Tristan —

No, I am ill at ease. My head's confused;

I almost think this tranquil valley is

That goal for which I've panted all my days;

That here, at length, my restless, soaring pride
Shall find its true repose.

Geoffrey [*gravely*] — I prithee, friend,
Remember that King René waits for you.

Tristan —

What is King René, or his hopes, to me?
What! For a province, which by law and right
Is truly mine, by our good swords achieved,
Shall I, in my youth's holiday, be chained
To his daughter — to a girl whom no one knows —
Whom no one e'er hath seen — whilst I —

Geoffrey — You rave!
This fit will pass. But now you are bewitched:
Stifle this feverish passion in your breast.

Tristan —

Could I do that, I were bewitched indeed.

Geoffrey —

Hush! Hush! Some one approaches.

[*IOLANTHE* returns from the house.]

Iolanthe —

Are you here?

Geoffrey —

Wilt lead us to the master of the house?

Iolanthe —

Alas! they are all gone, and no one came
In answer to my call. They have forsook me.

Tristan —

But they will come again.

Iolanthe —

Yes; thou art right —

They have gone forth, I warrant, to the vintage.
I, too, at times go with them. But, when not,
There still is some one with me.

Geoffrey [*to TRISTAN*] —

You stay here?

Tristan —

I will.

Geoffrey — So be it, while I go watch the pass.

[*Exit, bowing to IOLANTHE, who does not return the salutation.*]

Iolanthe [*listening*] —

Goes thy friend hence?

Tristan —

He will return anon.

Your pardon now — let me atone a fault
I have committed; but oh, chide me not!
As you lay sleeping, from your breast I took
An ornament, as a memorial token.
'Tis here!

Iolanthe — Where? where?

[*TRISTAN gives her the amulet.*
An ornament — and mine?

Tristan —

Yes; I conjecture so.

Iolanthe — It is not mine;

But I will ask of Martha. [*Lays the amulet on the table.*

Tristan — In its stead

Pray give me one of yonder blushing roses,
That rear their petals, fairest 'mongst all flow'rs,
As though they were the counterfeit of thee!

Iolanthe —

A rose? Oh, willingly!

[*Plucks and gives him a white rose.*

Tristan —

Ah, it is white!

Give me the red one, that is fair as thou!

Iolanthe —

What meanest thou? — a red one?

Tristan [*pointing*] —

One of these.

Iolanthe —

Take it thyself!

Tristan —

No; let me keep the rose

Which thou hast chosen, which thy fair hand has gathered;

And in good sooth I do applaud thy choice.

For the white rose, within whose calyx sleeps

A faint and trembling ruddiness, betypes

The dreamlike beauty of this garden fair.

Give me another rose — a white one, too;

Then with the twin flowers will I deck my cap.

And wear them as thy colors evermore.

Iolanthe [*plucks and gives him a red rose*] —

Here is a rose; meanest thou one like this?

Tristan [*starts*] —

I asked thee for a white rose.

Iolanthe —

Well, and this?

Tristan —

Why this?

[*Aside*] — What thought comes o'er me?

[*Aloud*] —

Nay, then, tell me

[*Holds up the two roses, along with another which he has himself gathered*] —

How many roses have I in my hand?

Iolanthe [*stretches out her hand towards them*] —

Give me them, then.

Tristan —

Nay, tell me without touching.

Iolanthe —

How can I so ?

Tristan [*aside*] — Alas ! alas ! she's blind !

[*Aloud, and with a faltering voice*] —

Nay, I am sure you know.

Iolanthe —

No ; you mistake.

If I would know how anything is shaped,

Or what its number, I must touch it first.

Is not this clear ?

Tristan [*confused*] — Yes, certainly ; you're right.

And yet sometimes —

Iolanthe —

Well, well ! — sometimes ?

Speak ! speak !

Tristan —

I think there are — that there are certain things

Which we distinguish by their hues alone,

As various kinds of flowers, and various stuffs.

Iolanthe —

Thou mean'st by this their character, their form :

Is it not so ?

Tristan —

Nay, not exactly that.

Iolanthe —

Is it so hard, then, to distinguish flowers ?

Are not the roses round, and soft, and fine,

Round to the feeling, as the zephyr's breath,

And soft and glowing as a summer's eve ?

Are gilliflowers like roses ? No ; their scent

Bedizzies, like the wine I gave to thee.

And then a cactus — are its arrowy points

Not stinging, like the wind when frosts are keen ?

Tristan [*aside*] —

Amazement !

[*Aloud*] —

Have they never told thee, then,

That objects, things, can be distinguished, though

Placed at a distance — with the aid — of sight ?

Iolanthe —

At distance ? Yes ! I by his twittering know

The little bird that sits upon the roof,

And, in like fashion, all men by their voice.

The sprightly steed whereon I daily ride,

I know him in the distance by his pace,

And by his neigh. Yet — with the help of sight ?

They told me not of that. An instrument

Fashioned by art, or but a tool, perhaps ?

I do not know this sight. Canst teach me, then,
Its use and purposes?

Tristan [*aside*] — O almighty powers!
She does not know or dream that she is blind.

Iolanthe [*after a pause*] —
Whence art thou? Thou dost use so many words
I find impossible to understand;
And in thy converse, too, there is so much
For me quite new and strange! Say! is the vale
Which is thy home so very different
From this of ours? Then stay, if stay thou canst,
And teach me all that I am wanting in.

Tristan —
No, O thou sweet and gracious lady, no!
I cannot teach what thou art wanting in.

Iolanthe —
Didst thou but choose, I do believe thou couldst.
They tell me I am tractable and apt.
Many, who erewhile have been here, have taught me
Now this, now that, which readily I learned.
Make but the trial. I am very sure
Thou hat'st me not. Thy tones are mild and gentle.
Thou wilt not say me "nay" when I entreat.
Oh, speak! I'm all attention when thou speakest.

Tristan —
Alas! attention here will stead thee little.
Yet — tell me one thing. Thou hast surely learned
That of thy lovely frame there is no part
Without its purpose, or without its use.
Thy hand and fingers serve to grasp at much;
Thy foot, so tiny as it is, with ease
Transports thee wheresoe'er thy wishes point;
The sound of words, the tone, doth pierce the soul
Through the ear's small and tortuous avenues;
The stream of language gushes from thy lips;
Within thy breast abides the delicate breath,
Which heaves, unclogged with care, and sinks again.

Iolanthe —
All this I've noted well. Prithee, go on.

Tristan —
Then tell me, to what end doth thou suppose
Omnipotence hath gifted thee with eyes?
Of what avail to thee are those twin stars,
That sparkle with such wondrous brilliancy,
They scorn to grasp the common light of day?

Iolanthe [*touches her eyes, then muses for a little*] —

You ask of what avail? — how can you ask?
 And yet I ne'er have given the matter thought.
 My eyes! my eyes! 'Tis easy to perceive.
 At eve, when I am weary, slumber first
 Droops heavy on my eyes, and thence it spreads
 O'er all my body, with no thought of mine,
 As feeling vibrates from each finger's tip.
 Thus, then, I know my eyes avail me much.
 And hast not thou experience had enough,
 Whercin thine eyes can minister to thee?
 Only the other morn, as I was planting
 A little rosebush here, a nimble snake
 Leapt out and bit me in the finger; then
 With the sharp pain I wept. Another time,
 When I had pined for many tedious days,
 Because my father was detained from home,
 I wept for very gladness when he came!
 Through tears I gave my bursting heart relief,
 And at mine eyes it found a gushing vent.
 Then never ask me, unto what avail
 Omnipotence hath gifted me with eyes,
 Through them, when I am weary, comes repose;
 Through them my sorrow's lightened; and through them
 My joy is raised to rapture.

Tristan —

Oh, forgive me!

The question was most foolish; for in thee
 Is such an inward radiance of soul,
 Thou hast no need of that which by the light
 We through the eye discern. Say, shall I deem
 That thou of some unheard-of race art sprung,
 Richly endowed with other powers than we?
 Thou livest lonely here — this valley, too,
 Seems conjured forth by magic 'mongst the hills.
 Hast thou come hither from the golden East,
 With Peris in thy train? Or art thou one
 Of Brahma's daughters, and from Ind hast been
 Transported hither by a sorcerer?
 O beautiful unknown! if thou be'st sprung
 Of mortal men, who call the earth their mother,
 Be thou to life's so transitory joys
 Susceptible as I, and deign to look
 With favor on a knight's devoted love!
 Hear this his vow: No woman shall efface
 (Stand she in birth and beauty ne'er so high)
 The image thou hast stamped upon my soul!

Iolanthe [*after a pause*] —

Thy words are laden with a wondrous power.
 Say, from what master didst thou learn the art,
 To charm, by words, which yet are mysteries?
 Meseemed as though I trod some path alone,
 Which I had never trod before; and yet
 All seems to me — all, all that thou hast said —
 So godlike, so enchanting! Oh, speak on —
 Yet no, speak not! Rather let me in thought
 Linger along the words which thou hast spoken,
 That mingled pain and rapture in my soul!

Enter GEOFFREY hurriedly.

Geoffrey —

I see men at a distance coming hither!
 Do not forget that we are here alone.

Tristan [*to IOLANTHE*] —

Now, noble maiden, must I take my leave.

Iolanthe —

Ah, no! no! Wherefore wilt thou go?

Tristan —

I'll come

Again, and soon — to-day I'll come again.
 Wilt thou permit me with thy hand to mark
 How high I am, that, when we next shall meet,
 Thou may'st distinguish me?

Iolanthe —

What need of that?

I know that few resemble thee in height.
 Thy utterance comes to me as from above,
 Like all that's high and inconceivable.
 And know I not thy tone? Like as thou speakest
 None speak beside. No voice, no melody
 I've known in nature, or in instrument,
 Doth own a resonance so lovely, sweet,
 So winning, full, and gracious as thy voice.
 Trust me, I'll know thee well amidst them all!

Tristan —

Then fare thee well, until we meet once more!

Iolanthe —

There — take my hand! Farewell! Thou'lt come again —
 Again, and soon? Thou know'st I wait for thee!

Tristan [*kneels and kisses her hand*] —

Oh, never doubt that I will come again.
 My heart impels me hither. Though I go,
 Still of my thoughts the better half remains;
 And whatsoever is left to me of life

Yearns back to thee with evermore unrest.
Farewell !

[*Exit through the concealed door, following GEOFFREY, who has retired during the last speech.*]

Iolanthe — Hark ! there he goes ! Among the hills,
From which so oft the stranger's foot resounds,
Now echoes his light step. Oh, hush ! hush ! hush !
I hear it now no more. Yes ; there again !
• But now — 'tis gone ! Will he indeed return ?
If he, too, like so many guests before,
Should come but this one time ! Oh ! no — no — no !
Did he not promise me, and pledge his vow,
He would come back to-day ? The dews are falling ;
• Already eve draws on. Ah, no ! to-day
He cannot come. Perhaps to-morrow, then ?
But now it is so lonely here.

SCENE V.

IOLANTHE, MARTHA, afterwards KING RENÉ and EBN JAHA, then
ALMERIK.

Martha [*enters from behind the house, and advances rapidly on seeing IOLANTHE*] — Dear child !

Great Heav'n ! How came you thus awake, and here ?

Iolanthe —

Oh, Martha, come to me ! Where have you been ?

Martha —

Afield, among the servants. But explain :

Who — who awoke you ?

Iolanthe —

Of myself I woke.

Martha —

How ! Of yourself ?

Iolanthe —

No otherwise know I.

But list — as yet you know not — here have been
Strange guests !

Martha —

You mock me ! Who were they ?

Iolanthe —

Two strangers whom I did not know at all,
And who, besides, were never here before,
It was such a pity you had gone away !

Martha —

You dream, my child. Two strangers ? Whence and how ?
It cannot be !

Iolanthe — Whence did the strangers come?
 I asked not that; for you have charged me oft,
 That I with questionings should not torment
 Our visitors.

Martha — Who were they, then, my child?

Iolanthe —
 Indeed, I do not know.

Martha — Were you alone, then?

Iolanthe —
 I called on you, but yet you heard me not.

Martha [*aside*] —
 Heavens! was it possible? —

[*Aloud*] — Say on, my child!

Iolanthe —
 Ah, Martha, none e'er came to us before,
 Like these two strangers — like, at least, to me.
 It cannot surely be, but that he comes
 From some fair land of marvel, different quite
 From this our land. For potent was his speech,
 Yet gentle and affectionate as thine.

[*KING RENÉ and EBN JAHIA enter unobserved through the concealed door, and remain listening in the background.*]

He gave me greeting with a song. O Martha!
 A song that teemed with meanings marvelous;
 It charmed the tears into mine eyes,
 Although I scarcely fathomed half of what it meant.

Martha —
 Be calm, my love!

[*Aside*] — What am I doomed to hear?

[*Aloud*] —
 But tell me, pray, of what he spoke with thee.

Iolanthe —
 Of much — oh, much! to me both new and strange;
 Knowledge had he of many, many things
 Whereof before I never heard. He said —
 Yet I, alack! could comprehend him not —
 He said, we could distinguish many things
 With — with the help of sight.

Martha [*aside*] — O God!

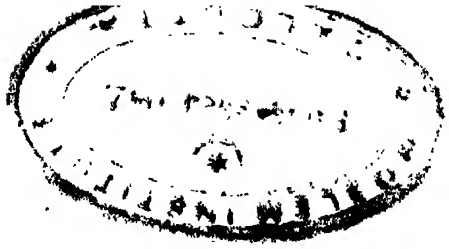
Iolanthe — Dost thou

Know what he meant by this?

Martha [*observes the KING and EBN JAHIA*] —

Great Heavens! the King!

René [*advances*] — My child!



Martha and Iolanthe



Iolanthe [*falling on his neck*] —

My own beloved father, art thou here?

René —

Thy tutor, Ebn Jahia, comes with me.

Iolanthe —

He too! Where is he? Let me give you welcome!

[*EBN JAHIA gives her his hand.*

René [*takes MARTHA aside while EBN JAHIA converses with*

IOLANTHE] —

What has occurred?

Martha —

O God! I do not know.

In full reliance that she could not wake

Till she was wakened up, we left the house

While she lay sleeping. But the while — so she

Maintains, although 'tis scarcely possible —

Some stranger has been here, and talked with her.

René —

Imprudent haste! When I went after him,

I did not mark to close the door behind me.

Well, Martha, and this stranger?

Martha —

He has spoken,

So far as I can gather from the maze,

Wherein she still doth wander, of her blindness.

René —

How! Of her blindness! Well, 'tis Heaven's decree

That she beforehand should be made aware!

So be it! —

[*Beckons to EBN JAHIA*] —

Ebn Jahia, hast thou heard?

Ebn Jahia —

This accident was fortunate indeed.

A stranger woke her. Here upon the table

I found the amulet. Yet what she heard

Of her condition is but dark to her.

I must require that she be fully told,

As you agreed.

René —

My resolution's taken.

[*Approaches IOLANTHE.*

Lend me thine ear attentively, my child!

No longer may't be hidden, that thy life

Hath reached a climax that will task thy firmness.

Wilt thou with patience hear me? — patiently,

If unexpected sorrow wound thy soul,

Learn to endure this sorrow?

Hath not the roaring blast, the zephyr's breath —
 Hath not the warmth, that circles everywhere,
 The earth's so fit arrangement, and its power
 To nurture plants with blossoms and with fruits —
 Hath not stone, metal, and the flowing streams,
 The choir of sweet birds' voices, shown me well
 The great Creator in the universe?
 And have I not by thee, even as by all
 That's dear to me, been taught to comprehend
 What our Creator with the world designed?
 Even I am an expression of his will.
 Where'er I turn — in nature, in the speech
 Of others, in the depths of mine own being,
 In thoughts that spring from thoughts, an endless chain,
 In all, to me the selfsame voice resounds,
 And of His glory loudly testifies.

René [*aside to EBN JAHIA*] —

Ah, Ebn Jahia, this so lovely faith,
 We have destroyed it!

Iolanthe —

Explain one thing to me:

I with my eyes, it seems, should grasp the world.
 Yon stranger, too, who lately was with me,
 And whose strange words are stamped so deeply here,
 He spoke of sight. What is it, then to see?
 Can I, O father, see his voice, which touched
 My soul with joy and sadness? Can I see
 With these my eyes the nightingale's thick note,
 Whereon I've mused so oft, and vainly striven
 To follow it in thought, away, away?
 Or is her song a flower, whose fragrant breath
 I know, but not its root, and stem, and leaves?

René —

Oh, my dear child, each of thy questions fills
 My soul with agony. Trust, love, to me,
 And leave it to a happier time to show
 What now to thee must be inexplicable.
 One thing, however, know: I have a hope —
 The hope which hath sustained me until now —
 That yet thy sight may be restored to thee:
 That thy dear eyes may open once again
 To the glad sunbeams; and oh, grant it, Heaven!
 Thy noble friend and tutor, Ebn Jahia,
 With his rare leech-craft hath been long preparing
 The favorable hour to test our hopes.
 Now is it come, my own, my darling child!

Confide in him. Go with him to the house.
 Martha shall wait upon thee. At the first
 Thou'lt sink into a slumber; and from that —
 If so it be Heaven's gracious will — aroused —

[*Is stifled with emotion.*]

Iolanthe —

What ails thee, father? Wherefore shakes thy hand?
 My own dear father, joy'st thou not, that now
 The hour has come thou'st panted for so long?
 Thou fearest it will prove unfortunate.
 Yet, even then, shall I not be, as ever,
 Thy child, thy own dear child — thy child, who joys
 To be so dear — joys in her happy lot!
 Let me go, then —

René —

Oh, my child! my child!

Iolanthe —

Nay, do not fear! For what my sage, kind master
 Has pondered well, will prosper, I am sure.
 It feels to me as though even now I knew
 The singular power which thou hast called the light,
 As it hath found its way to me already.
 Ah, while that wondrous stranger was beside me,
 A feeling quivered through me, which I ne'er
 Had known before; and every word he spoke
 Resounded like an echo in my soul,
 With new and unimagined melodies.
 Didst thou not say the power of light is swift,
 And gives significance to what it touches?
 That it is also closely blent with warmth —
 With the heart's warmth? Oh! I know it is.
 If what thou call'st the light consist in this,
 Then a forewarning tells me it will be
 Revealed to me to-day. Yet on one point
 Thou dost mistake. 'Tis not the eye that sees;
 Here, close beside the heart, our vision lies;
 Here is it seated in remembrance sweet,
 A reflex of the light that pierced my soul,
 The light I go with bounding hope to meet!

[*Exit into the house with MARTHA.*]

René [to *EBN JAHIA*, who is about to follow] —

Stay, Ebn Jahia! Canst understand all this?
 Where is the stranger, who intruded thus
 Upon her bosom's peace? How to myself
 Can I explain these passion-laden words?
 What thinkest thou?

Ebn Jakia — Not easily explained
Is the full climax of a woman's mood,
And this, I own, goes counter to my plans.

René —
Explain thyself!

Ebn Jakia — Suppose her thoughts are bent
To rest upon this stranger — then 'twould seem
That he controls her, and I strongly doubt
A happy issue to my art. And yet
In this conjuncture two desires may meet,
Which, blent in intimate communion, may
Strive to one end with like intensity.
In this hope I may rest — but only feebly.

[*Exit into the house.*]

René —
Who could it be was here? Unless Bertrand
Should chance to know —
[*Enter ALMERIK through the concealed door.*
My Almerik! Thou there?

Almerik —
I bring a letter for my liege.

René — From Tristan?

[*Breaks open the seal*] —
It is from him. What do I see? Come hither!
He breaks with me. He wishes to undo
Our solemn contract!

Almerik — How! Undo the contract?

René [*reading*] —
Amazement! He admits him in the wrong,
And leaves me to dictate the amends;
Yet—he repudiates my daughter's hand.

Almerik —
Matchless audacity!

René — Ah, Almerik!
This is the fate that dogs me evermore.
An evil portent this, I fear me much,
For what this hour may bring. The nuptials,
Whereon I had the fairest visions reared,
Unconsciously were wedded with the hope
That Iolanthe should regain her sight.
That hope is gone — a little time may see
The other crushed. Yet no! I will not stoop
To foolish, fond lamenting! Let that come
Which Heaven in wisdom hath ordained for us!
Who brought the letter?

Almerik — One of Geoffrey's people,
Who said that Tristan now was lodged with him.

René—
With Geoffrey? Well, there still, perchance, is hope.
Perchance he may — But yet — What noise is that?
The clash of arms resounding from the pass!

Almerik [*approaches the door*] —
'They force an entrance —

René — Force? Injurious knaves!

Almerik —
A handful of our people —

René — Out with your sword!
They shall not flout King René unchastised.

SCENE VI.

KING RENÉ, ALMERIK, TRISTAN, *in complete armor, with his train.*
Afterwards GEOFFREY, *with his train.*

[During the progress of this scene the evening red spreads over the valley and the distant hills, and remains so till the close of the piece.]

Tristan —
Give back ! The force, that sought to keep the pass,
Has yielded to our arms. Do you surrender ?

René —
How now ! What man art thou, whose ruffian hands
With shock of arms doth desecrate this ground ?
Stand, or my wrath shall strike thee to the dust !

Tristan —
Husband thy words, old man. I have no fears.
I do believe this place is in the thrall
Of some unholy and malignant power,
Which keeps thee trembling, but gives nerve to me.
If that thou be'st a sorcerer, and dost hope
For aid from magic spells, despair thy charm.
For know, the pope did consecrate this sword;
This scarf was woven, too, by holy hands
Within the Mary Convent at Avignon,
And, 'neath this mail of proof, abides the will
To quell thee, as Saint George the dragon quelled.

René—
Deluded man! what motive brings thee here?

Tristan —
Reply to me! Art thou this valley's lord?

René —

Truly, I am this valley's lord, I own;
Nor ends my title there. But who art thou?

Enter GEOFFREY with his train.

Geoffrey —

What do I see? King René!

[Kneels]

Noble king!

Tristan — What's here? King René?

René —

Geoffrey, thou in league

With one that is thy monarch's foe?

Geoffrey —

Your pardon!

He posted on before. I came too late.

René [to TRISTAN] —

Yet tell me, who art thou?

Tristan —

My name is Tristan

Of Vaudemont: a name you well do know.

René —

How? Tristan!

[To GEOFFREY] — Is this true?

Geoffrey —

'Tis as he says.

René [musing] —

And so 'twas you, belike, as I conclude,
Were here to-day already?

Tristan —

Yes, my liege;

Chance, not presumption, led me to this place.

I did not dream that you were ruler here.

René —

But say, what motive brings you back again?

Tristan —

You know it.

René —

Nay, I know it not. Explain.

Tristan —

Can this be so? Within this blooming vale,
Where all is marvelous, there lies concealed,
And its most foremost wonder, a fair girl,
Whose praise not all Provence's troubadours
Could chant in measures equal to her worth.

René —

And this fair girl, you say — continue, sir!

Tristan —

Upon my soul such impress deep hath wrought
That I am bound her slave for evermore.

René —

And know you who she is?

Tristan — No. Yet there's proof
Upon her countenance, and in her words,
Of high degree and inborn nobleness.

René —
And have you noted not that Nature, who
In all things else hath been so bountiful,
Left her one flaw ?

Tristan — Ah, yes, alas! she's blind!
Yet there doth flow within her soul a light
That makes all luminous which else were dark!

René —
And though you are aware that she is blind —

Tristan —
Yet at her feet with rapture would I lay
The golden circle of my earldom down.

René —
Now, by the holy image in Clairvaux,
You are the rarest marvel of our vale!
You press in here with weapons in your hand,
To bear off that which hath for years been yours,
Yet which you now insultingly contemn.

Tristan —
How so, my liege ?

René — Know, then, that this fair girl,
Who took your heart a prisoner, is my daughter!

Tristan —
Your daughter, she?

René — My daughter, my young count:
The same whom you, as this your letter bears,
Can in no wise consent to take for bride;
The same who raised in you dislike so strong,
That, but to 'scape from her, you were content
To quit your claims forever to Lorraine!
The same, moreover, whom you so have charmed,
That I might almost doubt if the poor girl
So lightly would abandon you.

Tristan — My liege,
Thou wilt not mock me with so wild a joy!

René—
 'Tis e'en as I have said.

Tristan — But why was she —

René —
Shut up within this vale? Of that anon.
You little deem, my lord, that you are come
At a momentous crisis. *Iolanthe.*

My darling child, perchance, e'en while we talk,
Sinks into darkest night for evermore,
Or wakes to taste the glorious light of day.

Tristan —

What sayest thou, my liege?

René —

This very hour

Has the physician, Ebn Jahia, chosen

To see, if possibly —

[*Approaches the house*] — But hush! methinks

There is a stir within. Keep silence, all!

She speaks! Oh, Tristan, hear! Iolanthe speaks!

Ah, are these sounds of pleasure, or of wail,

That murmur o'er my darling angel's lips?

But some one comes.

SCENE VII.

*To the others enter BERTRAND, afterwards MARTHA, IOLANTHE and
EBN JAHIA.*

René [*to BERTRAND, who enters from the house*] —

Quick, Bertrand! quick, and tell me,

How goes on all within?

Bertrand —

Alas! I know not.

She has awaked, and it is nearly over;

But I ran forth in terror. [*Enter MARTHA hastily.*

Martha —

She can see!

René —

How, Martha — see?

Tristan —

Oh, grant it, Heaven!

Martha —

Hush! hush!

She's coming forth.

*Enter EBN JAHIA, leading IOLANTHE by the hand. He beckons to the
others to retire.*

Iolanthe —

Where art thou leading me?

O God! where am I? Support me — oh, support me!

Ebn Jahia —

Calm thee, my child!

Iolanthe —

Support me — oh, stand still!

I ne'er was here before — what shall I do

In this strange place? Oh, what is that? Support me!

It comes so close on me, it gives me pain.

Ebn Jahia —

Iolanthe, calm thee! Look upon the earth!

That still hath been to thee thy truest friend,
And now too greets thee with a cordial smile.
This is the garden thou hast ever tended.

Iolanthe —

My garden — mine ? Alas ! I know it not.
The plants are terrible to see — take care !
They're falling on us !

Ebn Jahia —

Cease your fears, my child.
These stately trees are the date palms, whose leaves
And fruit to thee have been long known.

Iolanthe —

Ah, no !

Indeed, I know them not !

[*Raises her eyes towards the sky*] —

This radiance, too,
That everywhere surrounds me — yon great vault,
That arches there above us — oh, how high !
What is it ? Is it God ? Is it His spirit,
Which, as you said, pervades the universe ?

Ebn Jahia —

Yon radiance is the radiance of the light.
God is in it, like as He is in all.
Yon blue profound, that fills yon airy vault,
It is the heaven, where, as we do believe,
God hath set up His glorious dwelling-place.
Kneel down, my child, and raise your hands on high
To heaven's o'erarching vault — to God — and pray !

Iolanthe —

Ah, teach me, then, to pray to Him as I ought.
No one hath ever told me how I should
Pray to this Deity who rules the world !

Ebn Jahia —

Then kneel thee down, my darling child, and say,
"Mysterious Being, who to me hath spoken
When darkness veiled mine eyes, teach me to seek Thee
In Thy light's beams, that do illumine this world ;
Still, in the world, teach me to cling to Thee !"

Iolanthe [*kneels*] —

Mysterious Being, who to me hath spoken
When darkness veiled mine eyes, teach me to seek Thee
In Thy light's beams, that do illumine this world ;
Still, in the world, teach me to cling to Thee ! —
Yes, He hath heard me. I can feel He hath,
And on me pours the comfort of His peace.
He is the only one that speaks to me,
Invisible and kindly, as before.

Ebn Jahia —

Arise! arise, my child, and look around.

Iolanthe —

Say what are these, that bear such noble forms?

Ebn Jahia —

Thou know'st them all.

Iolanthe —

Ah, no; I can know nothing.

René [*approaching IOLANTHE*] —

Look on me, Iolanthe — me, thy father!

Iolanthe [*embracing him*] —

My father! Oh, my God! Thou art my father!

I know thee now — thy voice, thy clasping hand.

Stay here! Be my protector, be my guide!

I am so strange here in this world of light.

They've taken all that I possessed away —

All that in old time was thy daughter's joy.

René —

I have culled out a guide for thee, my child.

Iolanthe —

Whom mean'st thou?

René [*pointing to TRISTAN*] — See, he stands expecting thee.

Iolanthe —

The stranger yonder? Is he one of those

Bright cherubim thou once did tell me of?

Is he the angel of the light come down?

René —

Thou knowest him — hast spoken with him. Think!

Iolanthe —

With him? with him? [*Holds her hands before her eyes.*

Father, I understand.

In yonder glorious form must surely dwell

The voice that late I heard — gentle, yet strong;

The one sole voice that lives in Nature's round.

[*To TRISTAN, who advances towards her*] —

Oh, but one word of what thou said'st before!

Tristan —

Oh, sweet and gracious lady!

Iolanthe —

List! oh list!

With these dear words the light's benignant ray,

Found out a way to me; and these sweet words

With my heart's warmth are intimately blent.

Tristan [*embraces her*] —

Iolanthe! Dearest!

René —

Blessings on you both

From God, whose wondrous works we all revere!

IT JUST HAPPENED SO.

COMEDY IN ONE ACT.

By OTTO BENZON.

(Translated for this work, by Olga Flinch. All rights of dramatic presentation are reserved by the author.)

[OTTO BENZON is a native of Copenhagen, where his father was an apothecary. He is about forty, and besides being a fertile dramatist is an artist, sportsman, miscellaneous writer, and a man of general activity and talent. He first came into prominence with "curtain raisers," of which this is one; later produced several plays of full length, the first entitled "A Scandal," and one of which was prohibited as too radical, but is popular as a reading play.]

PERSONS OF THE PLAY.

MISS ELLEN.

THE DOCTOR.

A MAID.

The scene is placed at a country house, a short distance from town.

The scene represents a comfortable sitting-room, handsomely furnished; pictures, plants, etc., but in quiet taste, nothing overdone. At the back: left a door, right a window, affording a view of trees in fall foliage. Left: open fireplace with wood fire. Right: door with a heavy portière. Center: table with sewing basket, books, newspaper.

MISS ELLEN seated at the table, reading.

Maid [enters upper left] — The Doctor is there.

MISS ELLEN [continuing her reading] — Ah, that is nice!
Ask him to come in. [Exit Maid.

The DOCTOR enters.

MISS ELLEN [puts out her hand to him without looking up from her book] — How do you do, Doctor!

DOCTOR [without taking her hand] — That must be a very interesting book.

MISS ELLEN — I merely wanted to finish a period. [Puts down the book.] How do you do, Doctor. Won't you take my hand?

DOCTOR — With your permission, I will kiss it.

MISS ELLEN [drawing back her hand] — Now do be sensible.

DOCTOR [pointing to the book] — One of Marlitt's novels?

MISS ELLEN — Is that supposed to be bitter contempt?

DOCTOR — Or perhaps one of Zola's?

Miss Ellen — And is that a little insult?

Doctor — What? that I credit your mind with such elasticity? Couldn't you just as well take it as a little compliment?

Miss Ellen [*doubtfully*] — Per—haps.

Doctor — When anything can be taken as a compliment, it is always wisest so to take it — especially when one thinks it is meant the other way. That is the finest way to parry a thrust.

Miss Ellen — Turning into a lecturer?

Doctor — I beg your pardon.

Miss Ellen — Do sit down.

Doctor — Thanks. [*Sits down and takes up the book.*]

Miss Ellen — You are curious, Doctor.

Doctor [*laying down the book*] — I just wanted to see if you worship the old or the new literature.

Miss Ellen — I worship neither.

Doctor — Ah! Above party strife!

Miss Ellen — The old wrote rather badly, but what they wrote of was good. The new write well, but what they write of is poor.

Doctor — Dear me, how clever that sounded! Say that again.

Miss Ellen — Now, Doctor!

Doctor — It sounded so natural.

Miss Ellen — You ought to be ashamed of yourself.

Doctor — No, why? No reason whatever. Neither have you. Even the best of us are not above once in a while saying something we have thought out in advance.

Miss Ellen — I do believe you are in a teasing mood to-day.

Doctor — Worse than usual?

Miss Ellen — No — perhaps not. [*She takes the book and turns the leaves.*] I suppose your reading is genuine hospital literature.

Doctor [*shrugging his shoulders*] — I am a doctor.

Miss Ellen — Oh, I don't mean that at all. I speak of belles-lettres. [*The DOCTOR turns toward her, with his arms on the table, and looks at her smiling.*] Well, I suppose the name is not very good. [*The DOCTOR shakes his head.*] For as a rule the contents have not much to do with beauty.

Doctor [*continues to look at her. Shakes his head reproachfully*] — Oh! oh!

Miss Ellen — Oh, I know you are sitting there making fun of me, but I don't care. — Why must we always have our attention drawn to what is ugly? why can't we look at what is good and beautiful? Don't sit and stare at me so.

Doctor — Why can't we look at what is good and —

Miss Ellen — Oh, no, you are intolerable! You treat me as if I were a child. Do you know how old I am?

Doctor — Yes, I know. You are one-and-twenty, but you look younger.

Miss Ellen — Oh, but it is impossible to talk with you.

Doctor — Well, what do you want?

Miss Ellen — I want you to understand that literature —

Doctor — Excuse me for interrupting, but does it particularly interest you to talk of literature?

Miss Ellen [somewhat hurt] — Then let us talk of something else.

Doctor — Not at all. So you want me to —

Miss Ellen — I want you to admit that books ought to give a picture of —

Doctor — Ought to give a picture of life.

Miss Ellen — Life is not always depressing.

Doctor — Nor is it always interesting.

Miss Ellen — And is only the depressing interesting?

Doctor — Conflicts are interesting.

Miss Ellen — But life holds something more than —

Doctor — Life "holds" first, money; secondly, love; and thirdly, money.

Miss Ellen — You are horrid.

Doctor — You are not.

Miss Ellen — Well, but love then — there is such a thing as happy love.

Doctor — Yes, I dare say there is.

Miss Ellen — Then why not write of that instead of choosing these —

Doctor — Because happy love is a private affair. Very interesting for those concerned, but a terrible bore for those who look on.

Miss Ellen — Oh, I don't know about that. A book that told of happy and beautiful relations and not of — these — well, ugly conditions, might be a very good book.

Doctor — Very good — yes. But very tiresome too. It would be something like the creation of the world when every-

thing was so very good. But the author soon discovered that to get life into things he would have to fall back on one of these "ugly conditions." So he let the serpent have its little game.

Miss Ellen — Doctor ! You really deserve that I should be angry with you.

Doctor — But you won't.

Miss Ellen — Why not?

Doctor — Because we never get our deserts in this world. That's why we have the next.

Miss Ellen — Do stop. Why are you bent upon teasing me? I was so glad when you came.

Doctor — Really?

Miss Ellen — You don't believe that?

Doctor — Well, yes, when you say so, but — [*Stops.*]

Miss Ellen — But?

Doctor — It would not have occurred to me.

Miss Ellen — What do you mean?

Doctor — Oh — the calmness with which you sat there finishing the period —

Miss Ellen — That hurt you?

Doctor — No, not at all, but — it did not exactly bespeak a very vivid pleasure.

Miss Ellen — Oh, it just happened so.

Doctor — There is a reason back of every little happening.

Miss Ellen — Yes, I ought to have jumped up, of course, and —

Doctor — Ought ! Not at all. No, you *would* have jumped up if you had been very pleased.

Miss Ellen — Yes, but it happened that —

Doctor — Yes, I believe you. Life is rich in mere happenings — richer than most people imagine. And they play a much more important part than they reasonably ought to. Such a simple little every-day happening can, when it comes at the right moment, change a whole life. It is quite like a side-track. An inch of difference at the starting point, and one lands many, many miles from the station that would otherwise have been reached. Believe me, there is a reason back of every little happening.

Miss Ellen — But nevertheless it is true that I was glad to see you. It was nice of you to come so soon.

Doctor — Really? It is good to hear that.

Miss Ellen — I did not think you could have got my letter already.

Doctor — Your letter?

Miss Ellen — Yes.

Doctor — Did you write to me, then?

Miss Ellen — Yes. Didn't you get my letter?

Doctor — No.

Miss Ellen — Oh, then why did you come?

Doctor — Thanks! [*He rises.*]

Miss Ellen [*laughing*] — Oh, I beg your pardon — I didn't mean it that way — but — then you did not know that mother was ill?

Doctor — No; is she in bed? [*Goes toward door right.*]

Miss Ellen — Yes, but she is asleep. Have you not time to wait a little?

Doctor — Ye-es.

Miss Ellen [*goes over to the mantel, and takes a box of matches*] — Suppose you were permitted to smoke a cigarette?

Doctor — In here?

Miss Ellen — Yes, since mother is not here.

Doctor — Thanks — perhaps it would be better not.

Miss Ellen [*turns away*] — Very well! As you please.

Doctor [*following her*] — Now that you press me so much, and in such a charming way —

Miss Ellen [*laughing*] — I knew you could not resist it. I will give you a light. [*Lights a match.*]

Doctor [*lights the cigarette*] — Thanks.

Miss Ellen — But tell me, Doctor, how you happened to come out to-day?

Doctor — Oh — I really don't know — I felt like — I wanted to see — that is to say — oh, I don't know, I really just happened out.

Miss Ellen [*smiling*] — There is a reason back of every happening.

Doctor — What do you mean by that?

Miss Ellen — Well, what did you mean a little while ago?

Doctor — I! I meant — oh, I meant nothing — really.

Miss Ellen — That is just what I meant, too.

Doctor — May I ask you a question, Miss Ellen? [*Miss ELLEN nods.*] Are you not perhaps — just the least little bit — of — a — flirt?

Miss Ellen [*smiling*] — I don't know. Do you think so?

Doctor — Sometimes.

Miss Ellen — Then you are sometimes unjust to me. I may once in a while be a little too full of life, but it is no more than that. I *will* not be a flirt. I can't bear to see it in others, and I should be ashamed of it in myself.

Doctor — Oh, now, you take it too solemnly.

Miss Ellen — No, not at all. A woman who flirts with a man has no right to blame him if he insults her.

Doctor — Insults —

Miss Ellen — Yes, if he is too free and easy. And I call it an insult the way men are with some women. Oh, I have seen it many a time.

Doctor — What do you really mean?

Miss Ellen — Merely the way they look at them — shake hands with them — or touch them — well, a man may not understand that, but — phew!

Doctor [*takes a cigarette from the box*] — May I?

Miss Ellen — Certainly.

Doctor — I hope I have never insulted you?

Miss Ellen — No, never. But I have seen you with others; you were different with them. But that is really long ago. I did not like you then. I did not like you at first anyway.

Doctor — I am glad you added "at first."

Miss Ellen — I did not like your ways.

Doctor — It is still in the past.

Miss Ellen [*smiling*] — Yes, now I have got accustomed to it, you see.

Doctor — Yes, one can get accustomed to a great deal.

Miss Ellen — A surprisingly great deal.

Doctor [*testily*] — Even things we don't like at all at first we can sometimes get so accustomed to that we can't do without them.

Miss Ellen [*smiling*] — For instance — tobacco.

Doctor — For instance, tobacco. Very true. [*He puts down the cigarette.*]

Miss Ellen — But — to resume — I don't blame them at all. Considering their position in life, I dare say it is very natural that they are what they are. At any rate I know very few — even among the best of them — who are not totally different toward the women they respect and those who are silly and flirtatious — A man will take every advantage offered him, so that is why we have to be on our guard — And a woman

can always determine the nature of their relation. If a man goes too far, it is her own fault.

Doctor — May I express my appreciation of the leniency you show toward men rather than toward your own sex?

Miss Ellen — I demand more of women, because I have less respect for men.

Doctor — I take my appreciation back.

Miss Ellen — You must remember that, as the world is, a man's past belongs to himself, but a woman's belongs to the man she marries. She must respect herself, or she cannot demand that others shall respect her. And she must never in the presence of a man do or say anything which she cannot tell her future husband without blushing.

Doctor — Such women are rare — and men don't deserve them.

Miss Ellen — No, poor things, they stand on a lower plane. As the saying is, with them the important thing is not to be the first, but to remain the last.

Doctor [*has taken a book from the table and is turning and twisting it in his hands. Suddenly — after a short pause — he looks up*] — Miss Ellen!

Miss Ellen — Yes.

Doctor — If — now — [*Stops.*]

Miss Ellen — If now what?

Doctor [*who has evidently been on the point of saying something else which he cannot get out*] — You are a splendid girl, Miss Ellen.

Miss Ellen [*laughing*] — No, I have a splendid mother.

Doctor — That also. [*After a short pause.*] But — tell me — do you think — do you really think that you — I mean — that you can always keep a man at the distance you choose?

Miss Ellen — I hope so. Do you know what mamma says?

Doctor — No.

Miss Ellen — No, I don't think I will tell you.

Doctor — Why, yes, do.

Miss Ellen — Well, then, she says: "I demand of my daughter that she shall take the first man who proposes to her."

Doctor — That is a rather severe demand.

Miss Ellen — No, not when it is really understood.

Doctor — Then you intend to be an obedient daughter?

Miss Ellen — Yes.

Doctor — Really ?

Miss Ellen — Yes. [*The DOCTOR rises and makes a bow.*]

Doctor — May I then have the honor to ask for your hand ?

Miss Ellen [*laughing*] — Oh, Doctor ! do behave yourself.

Doctor — You won't have me.

Miss Ellen — Oh, nonsense !

Doctor — What became of the obedient daughter ?

Miss Ellen — The obedient daughter ? But you don't know at all whether you are the first.

Doctor — I beg your pardon ! There is perhaps a number 1.

Miss Ellen — That is possible.

Doctor — And a number 2, — and a number 3. — Perhaps you keep a stock of them ?

Miss Ellen [*laughing*] — What a terrible remark !

Doctor — And your mother has only said that you should take the first — not that you should take him at once.

Miss Ellen — How sharp-sighted you are, Doctor.

Doctor [*after a pause*] — Would it be indiscreet to ask if there really were a number 1 ?

Miss Ellen [*smiling*] — Yes, I am afraid it would be indiscreet.

Doctor [*looking down in an embarrassed way, and working the book in his hands*] — They said once that your neighbor, young Mogens Brun, over here —

Miss Ellen [*rises*] — Look here, instead of sitting there ruining my album, you would do better to write something in it.

Doctor — It only lacked that.

Miss Ellen — You promised me a poem last time you were here.

Doctor — Yes, I always was rash.

Miss Ellen — Here is pen and ink for you. Now — write something sensible.

Doctor — Something sensible — in rhyme ! No, my dear Miss Ellen, when one has anything sensible to say, one really says it in prose.

Miss Ellen [*smiling*] — Then say it in prose.

Doctor — But I have nothing sensible to say.

Miss Ellen [*laughing*] — Then say something nonsensical in rhyme — or in prose, if you don't like poetry.

Doctor — I like poetry very much — that is to say, good poetry. Not the kind I make myself. [*He opens the book.*] Poetry — that ought to be all feeling — all music — oh, I know very well what it ought to be — the only trouble is I can't do it. When I try, I have a feeling as if I put my thoughts in strait-jacket and dressed up my feelings in fine feathers. The thing loses all flavor.

Miss Ellen — Write that.

Doctor — Yes, that's what I intend to do. [*He tries the pen.*]

Miss Ellen — Is the pen bad? Will you have a new one?

Doctor — No, no, no! [*He begins to write. MISS ELLEN goes behind him, and stands looking over his shoulder.*]

Doctor — No, you must not stand there.

Miss Ellen — Then can't you do it?

Doctor — No.

Miss Ellen — Perhaps I make your muse jealous.

Doctor — Oh, if only you would!

Miss Ellen [*laughs. A bell rings in the adjoining room*] — That was mamma ringing. [*She goes out, right, and returns shortly after.*] Mamma is awake now.

Doctor — May I go in? [*Rises.*]

Miss Ellen — Are you through? Yes, you may go in, if you please. Meanwhile I will read what you wrote.

[*DOCTOR goes out, right.*]

[*MISS ELLEN takes the book and reads aloud to herself*] —

If a thought in its infancy's prime
I force to a stature full-grown,
And cramp it to meter and rhyme,
All its freshness and grace will be flown.

I have often arrested my pen,
And left unembodied my thought:
The loveliest songs are within,
They are not by the poets enwrought.

[*DOCTOR returns.*]

Miss Ellen — That is very pretty, Doctor. Thank you. [*DOCTOR bows lightly.*] I hope it is nothing serious with mamma?

Doctor — No, not at all. I have told her she may get up. Have you a piece of paper? I want to write a prescription.

Miss Ellen — Here. [*She gives it to him.*]

Doctor — Thanks. [*Sits down and writes.*]

Miss Ellen [*reading the verses over again silently*] — Tell me, Doctor, did you compose that now?

Doctor — I beg your pardon?

Miss Ellen — I ask if you composed that [*pointing at the verses*] now, on the spur of the moment?

Doctor — Yes, I heard you.

Miss Ellen — Then why did you say “I beg your pardon”?

Doctor — What do you mean? Why did I say — I say that because — because — oh, because I did *not* compose it now. I did that when I came home, last time I had been here, and you had teased me for a poem. What a question to ask!

Miss Ellen [*laughing*] — Oh, don’t be angry, please.

Doctor [*giving her the prescription*] — Will you send to the apothecary for that?

Miss Ellen — Will it help?

Doctor [*shakes his head*] — No-o —

Miss Ellen — Then why —

Doctor — Oh, they usually give it — and it can do no harm.

Miss Ellen — You do inspire such unusual confidence, Doctor. [*DOCTOR bows lightly.*] When one is not dying, you have no respect for any ailment. [*DOCTOR shrugs his shoulders.*] I am glad I have not troubled you with my own little case.

Doctor — Have you a case?

Miss Ellen — Oh, it is nothing.

Doctor — Why of course it is. What is it?

Miss Ellen [*pointing to her eye*] — It is something here. It hurts so, when I work my eyelid. [*DOCTOR looks at the eye and shakes his head.*] What shall I do for it?

Doctor — You must stop working your eyelid.

Miss Ellen [*shakes her head laughing*] — No, Doctor, you are impossible. But I like you very much nevertheless.

Doctor — Oh, you just say that. I can leave that prescription at the apothecary’s myself. I go straight past.

Miss Ellen — But won’t you stay to dinner?

Doctor — Thanks — I don’t know —

Miss Ellen — Well, to be sure, there is nobody but mamma and myself to entertain you. Unless Mogens Brun should come over. It is a long time since he has been here.

Doctor — Would you like him to come? I beg your pardon, I was on the point of being indiscreet again.

Miss Ellen [after having considered it for a moment or two] — I have a good mind to tell you something — and you are the first one I tell, except mamma, of course. — You know Mogens Brun, and you know that he and I have always been together since we were children — or rather since I was a child ; for he was already grown up then. — But, as I was going to tell you : once — several years ago — four years ago — it was the year papa died — I was only seventeen — Mogens and I were out crabbing together —

Doctor — Crabbing?

Miss Ellen — Yes, catching crabs. And a terrible storm came up. And then suddenly, while we were standing under a large tree, Mogens said : “ Ellen, will you be my wife ? ” [*The DOCTOR turns slightly away and plays nervously with something.*] And when I really understood him, I — began to cry — remember I was so very young. [*Pause.*]

Doctor [in a low voice] — And then?

Miss Ellen — Yes. Then he said a great deal more, and then I said that I would like to, but that I did not love him so very much, not as much, for instance, as I loved mamma — if he thought that was enough.

Doctor [hoarsely] — Well?

Miss Ellen — And now comes the prettiest part of the story ; then Mogens took both my hands and said : “ Little Ellen, it might be enough for me, but I am afraid that it would not be enough for you. Don’t think of it any more ; but some day, if you should need some one who loves you, then you know you have me. ” Then he wiped my eyes — for the crabs were in my handkerchief — and then we trotted home.

Doctor [in a low voice] — Yes, I dare say he is a good fellow.

Miss Ellen — That he is.

Doctor [in a toneless voice] — Do you care for him now?

Miss Ellen — I don’t know.

[*The DOCTOR rises and walks up and down the floor.*]

Maid [enters] — Mr. Brun has just come. He rode over to the stables.

Miss Ellen [springs up. At the same moment her eyes meet the DOCTOR’S. To the Maid] — Very well, thanks. [*Maid goes out.*] Why do you smile, Doctor? was it because — I sprang up?

Doctor — No, of course — that only just happened so.

Miss Ellen [quickly] — Why yes — it — [*She stops suddenly and drops her eyes.*]

Doctor [goes up to her and takes her hand] — Good-bye, Miss Ellen.

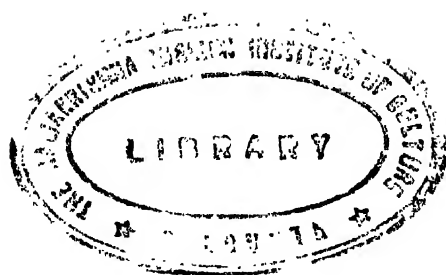
Miss Ellen [without looking up] — You won't stay? [*The DOCTOR shakes his head. MISS ELLEN looks at him.*] You are not angry?

Doctor — Angry ! — no.

Miss Ellen — You know how very much I like you.

Doctor [bends down and kisses her hand] — But you don't know how very much I like you. Good-bye. [*He goes out.*

MISS ELLEN stands a moment, looking after him, then she sits down with her hands clasped in her lap.]



808.8/GAR



167253





